

Strategic Vision 2026-2030



*“Commit your work to the LORD,
and your plans will be established”*

Proverbs 16:3

2025-26 Strategic Planning Committee

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The Mission, Vision and Plan

It is important for a congregation to reflect on their current ministry and to look forward. Evaluating the present shows us where God is at work and how He is leading. It also helps us to see what areas need strengthening as we seek to be faithful stewards with all that God provides.

The *mission* of our church is one that doesn't change over time. That's not something that we have to discern. Our mission was given to us by Jesus as recorded in Matthew 28:16-20, commonly known as the Great Commission. This commitment is expressed in our mission statement:

Connecting People to the Hope of Jesus in Aberdeen and Beyond

The *vision* of this plan prayerfully looks ahead at some specific areas of ministry development and needs regarding our facilities and grounds. The vision component looks ahead and imagines what we might look like by 2030. Of course, we know that we can neither predict the future nor anticipate the unexpected. However, we believe it is important to aim ourselves at goals that are means for fulfilling our mission faithfully and effectively.

The *plan* is the nuts and bolts of how we will seek to execute our vision that serves our mission. The following plan is divided into two sections. The first deals with ministry development. Our pastors have identified areas of ministry to be explored and planned for development. Our Strategic Planning Committee has come alongside our pastors and prayed and pondered over these areas of ministry development. We believe devoting effort and resources in these areas will result in a healthier ministry, helping us to fulfill our mission.

The second part of this plan deals with items of facility and grounds development. This plan does not include every conceivable future need, but it lays out what we believe needs to be accomplished over the next five years.

This strategic plan is an intentional plan that has been prayed over and much discussed. We humbly submit it to God's will and purposes for us as a congregation. Our desire is that we will see a unity of effort among the congregation to pursue its goals with joy and sacrificial service for the advance of the gospel and the glory of God.

Our *core values* express what we value as a congregation in our context. Our aim is that our ministry and use of resources is driven by our values to which we are committed.

Core Values

1. We value worship.

We believe Christians are created for worship. The gathered congregation should declare together the great biblical truths of God through music, prayer, Scripture reading, and preaching. The goal of our worship is a sincere expression of God's infinite worth. We desire our worship to be God-centered and Christ-exalting, with the proclamation of the Word of God central.

2. We value biblical teaching.

We believe that all our teaching should seek to understand and apply the Bible. Our preaching ministry is primarily expository, meaning our pastor most often preaches through books of the Bible. We work to choose materials for Sunday School and discipleship opportunities that focus on teaching the content of the Bible. We believe the heart of discipleship is learning and living God's Word.

3. We value prayer.

We believe God promises to hear the prayers of believers, and that he works in concert with our prayers as he accomplishes his will. Our goal is to be a people of prayer who continually seek the will of God and submit ourselves to him. We believe that to be filled with the Holy Spirit, we must be a praying people. We believe that the faithfulness and effectiveness of our ministry depends first on prayer.

4. We value missions.

We believe that Jesus commanded his followers to participate in getting the gospel to all people. Therefore, we are committed to involve ourselves beyond our local ministry. This involves praying for missions, giving monetarily to missions, learning about missions, and going on mission.

5. We value sharing Jesus with others.

We believe that embedded in our mission to make disciples is the activity of sharing the gospel with unbelievers. All people need to be forgiven of sin and reconciled to God. We believe this only happens through a personal commitment to follow Jesus. We seek to provide opportunities for believers to learn how to share Jesus more effectively with others because we desire to be a congregation that boldly shares Jesus.

6. We value meaningful church membership.

We believe membership requires consistent participation and the pursuit of godly lives. We believe that church members share the responsibility to support the ministry of the church through the exercise of spiritual gifts in volunteer service and through financial giving. Our goal is to have a participating congregation of faithful believers who joyfully engage with the church's ministry and strive toward doing all that we do with excellence.

7. We value the family.

We believe that God created the family as the fundamental unit for human fulfillment, discipleship, and care. Our goal is to enable families to grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ. We seek to help students develop a biblical worldview and provide discipleship for students that prepares them to face the challenges of college, career, and adulthood. We desire to provide opportunities for adults to strengthen marriages and homes.

8. We value our community of faith.

We believe that the Christian life, by design, is to be lived within an intergenerational community. We are encouraged and strengthened through our corporate worship, small group gatherings, prayer meetings, and other activities. We believe that Christian friendship is important, and we seek to facilitate ways for people to connect with each other.

9. We value music.

We believe music is a gift given by God for worship. We are committed to choosing songs for congregational singing that are biblically based and theologically rich. We believe that our singing is a discipleship tool for teaching the gospel. We aim to sing songs familiar to most and easy to sing. We work to keep our voices heard in order to encourage enthusiastic participation. We have a commitment to sing both old and new, believing it is important to bridge the generations.

10. We value our nation's military.

We believe that we have a special responsibility to military families because of our proximity to Fort Bragg. Many who serve live in our immediate communities. Our goal is to maintain an intentional and robust outreach to our military, recognizing and attempting to help minister to their unique needs, while creating a space in which they can belong, serve and know they are understood and appreciated.

A Strategy for Ministry Development

1. Evangelism and Missions *(Core Values 4 and 5)*

The Vision

Our vision is two-fold for evangelism and two-fold for missions. In evangelism, our desire is to be a congregation highly engaged in sharing the gospel in all the places where we live, work, and play. Secondly, we desire to see our current outreach ministries be more effective for evangelism.

In missions, our goal is to see a stronger connection developed between AFB and our Southern Baptist missions resources and personnel. This includes the International Mission Board (IMB), The North American Mission Board (NAMB), and Baptist on Mission (BOM) of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. Secondly, our vision is that annually a minimum of four mission going opportunities will be available to our congregation with a diversity of places and types of mission work.

The Plan for Evangelism

- **The Three Circles**

We will use some of our Sunday School Leaders training to teach the 3 Circles method of having gospel conversations to our Sunday School teachers.

- **Friends & Family 5th Sundays**

We will use our 5th Sundays to incorporate an evangelistic emphasis along with our fellowship. We will ask our Sunday School leaders to teach, review and facilitate the practice of the 3 Circles method of sharing the gospel in Sunday School on those Sundays. The sermon in the worship service will be an evangelistic message. And we will use these Sundays to emphasize inviting unchurched/lost people to Sunday School and worship.

- **A “Bible 101 Class”**

We will implement a discipleship class during Sunday School once per year that will span 13 weeks. This class will be targeting people who are “seekers” and those who have little to no familiarity with the Bible. It will be a basic “Bible 101” kind of class that will be taught by one of the pastors.

- **An Annual Evangelistic Men’s Event**

We desire to see our Men’s Ministry develop an evangelistic event annually.

- **Evangelistic Visits through Upward and VBS**

We will make our Upward ministry more evangelistic by identifying unchurched families during sign-ups and make evangelistic home visits during the season. We will also identify unchurched families whose children participate in Vacation Bible School. These efforts will be led by the pastors with the goal of involving volunteers as well.

The Plan for Missions

- **Richardson partnership**

We will develop a partnership with Eric and Melissa Richardson, who serve in Southeast Asia through the IMB. After an initial vision casting visit, the goal will be to work with Eric to plan an annual opportunity.

- **Quarterly short-term mission trips**

Our goal will be to coordinate with an SBC partner a quarterly short-term mission opportunity for the congregation. These will be intentionally planned to vary in distance, cost, and type of mission work.

- **Annual missions month**

Our plan is to develop and create a new tradition of having a missions month. Our current aim is to do this in August. During the Sunday mornings we will have sharing from the previous twelve months of missions going. This will be a time of information, celebration and inspiration about missions. We will attempt to have a guest speaker from the IMB if possible to cap off the month. During missions month, our Wednesday Core Discipleship, youth, and children will focus on missions.

- **WMU promotion and support for missions**

Our WMU will work to be more active in supporting and promoting mission efforts of the church, particularly with the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering through special events and promotions.

2. Congregational Care *(Core Values 1,6, and 8)*

The Vision

Our vision for congregational care involves three areas: homebound ministry, deacon ministry, and a counseling ministry.

The Homebound Ministry Leadership Team and pastors will coordinate to ensure that homebound members are contacted at least once per month. Additionally, each homebound member will be served the Lord's Supper by a deacon or pastor once per quarter.

Our goal is for each of our deacons to minister to the sick and homebound as well as faithfully contacting their assigned members, active and inactive, as part of their routine function as servants of the congregation.

Our vision for congregational care for this strategic plan includes the realization of a new biblical counseling ministry that will focus on developing support group-based opportunities for people based on the GriefShare model. However, we envision expanding the areas as God leads individuals to begin new groups centered on particular issues.

The Plan for Congregational Care

- **Care through the Deacon Ministry**

By raising the level of expectation of our deacon ministry and doing deeper training over our five-year plan, we hope that our deacon ministry will become a more consistent and effective means through which congregational care is happening. We will gradually work toward a functioning monthly reporting system for deacons to provide accountability and accounting of our congregational care ministry.

- **Care through the Homebound Ministry Leadership Team**

Our Homebound Ministry Leadership Team has been instrumental in keeping regular touch with our homebound members. We will work to empower this team and volunteers to strengthen their ministry area.

- **A New Core Class on Care**

Pastor Brandon will develop a Core Discipleship Class targeted toward equipping the congregation at large on principles of congregational care.

- **Support Group Based Counseling Ministry**

A counseling ministry at AFB will take shape during our five-year plan in conjunction with Pastor Brandon's work through his Doctor of Ministry project.

The goal is to have a biblical counseling ministry that focuses on support-group based counseling.

3. Leadership Development *(Core Values 2, 4, and 7)*

The Vision

A congregation needs effective leaders for faithful and effective ministry. These are individuals bearing the fruit of the Holy Spirit from a sincere faith and who are gifted and equipped to lead others. We want to be intentional in identifying, equipping and empowering church members for leadership roles. We envision addressing leadership development for men in their role as spiritual leader in their home, for teachers, for directors of ministries, for men expressing a desire for pastoral ministry and for men and women expressing a desire for service in missions.

The Plan for Leadership Development

- **Discipleship of parents for spiritual leadership in the home.**

We have already started and will continue to develop and offer three-week "Marriage & Family Core Classes" on Sunday mornings during the Sunday School time by our pastoral team. These classes focus on marriage, parenting, family worship, financial stewardship, and the church.

- **Developing teachers to specifically teach the Bible well.**

We believe it is necessary for our mission to make disciples, that we make sure we are continually training and developing all who teach at AFB to teach the Bible with excellence. We also believe it is the church's task to grow its members in maturity, in depth of biblical knowledge, as well as in number. This requires the development of an ever-expanding group of gifted and trained teachers. In addition to regular teacher training in Bible study and instruction, we will explore promoting certificate training programs, such as what is offered through Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary or other appropriate providers of such training.

- **Pastoral ministry internship program.**

The Senior Pastor has already developed an internship program through which two men have already completed. It is our desire to see more young men pursue pastoral ministry, if indeed God has planted such a desire in them and

they meet the biblical qualifications. This internship would be a prerequisite for the congregation licensing a man to the gospel ministry. During the span of this strategic plan, this internship will be publicized more regularly, both within our congregation and through the Sandhills Baptists Association.

4. Growing and Sending *(Core Values 4 and 5)*

The Vision

As we see Sunday School and worship attendance grow, we believe working toward multiplication of new churches in Moore County or strengthening existing churches is better than multiplying worship services in the same location. However, multiple services may be a necessary short-term solution for growth while working toward sending opportunities.

We also want to be prepared to send temporary teams to sister associational churches who may need assistance for a season.

Our vision is to see our congregation develop a culture of growth on our own campus, coupled with mobilizing members to be involved in church plants and revitalizations in Moore County.

The Plan for Sending

- **Key Partnerships**

We will work in cooperation with the Sandhills Baptist Association, sister churches, and the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina for appropriate training and networking. Our state convention has a partnership with the North American Mission Board (NAMB) called SendNC, which assists churches with training and resources.

We are prayerfully considering a partnership with Eagle Springs Baptist Church. They have identified and are preparing a member of the church to go out as a church planter in Moore County. Eagle Springs anticipates launching the plant in Carthage in December 2027.

We believe AFB could begin to prayerfully consider how we could plan to support and send in partnership with Eagle Springs. As we have prayed, we believe this is an opportunity where God is at work in which we can join.

Eagle Springs has already moved forward in the process with "SendNC" - the church planting division of our state convention in partnership with NAMB. The planting pastor will Kyle Nichols. He and his wife, have been members of Eagle

Springs for ten years. He is completing his MDIV at Southeastern Seminary this Spring. He will enter an 18-month residency at Eagle Springs with Pastor Matt Brogli and do training with the state convention before launching the plant in Carthage in December 2027.

We believe our partnership would include the following:

- A commitment to pray for and with Kyle and his wife
- A three-year monetary commitment, 2027,2028 and 2029
- Asking AFB members over the next 12 months to prayerfully consider being sent by AFB to help plant the new church in Carthage.

5. Adding Lay Pastors *(Core Value 2)*

The Vision

We want to explore adding to our congregation's organization an expanded body of pastors consisting of vocational pastors (staff) and lay pastors. We believe that a plurality of pastors is the New Testament model and consistent with historic Baptist practice.

We believe that a church embodies the New Testament principles best in its organization and leadership when its pastors provide spiritual leadership, teaching, and guidance, when deacons serve the physical and spiritual needs of its membership, and when the congregation has the general oversight and responsibility for the church's ministry.

In the New Testament, church leadership is spoken of in the plural using the titles elders, pastors, and overseers interchangeably for what we traditional call a pastor. A plurality of church leadership promotes, by example, the unity and community of the diverse body of Christ.

This exploration will require a methodical and patient educational phase for some time before any actions are recommended.

The Plan for Adding Lay Pastors

- **Pastoral Teaching**

The addition of a Pastor Team (consisting of staff and lay) to AFB's organization would be a paradigm shift of great significance. Therefore, sufficient

foundational understanding will be communicated through pastoral preaching and teaching to the congregation at large.

- **Key Leaders Study**

The deacon body and the Strategic Planning Committee will spend time in biblical study and conversation with the pastors. Resources will be used to help the pastors, deacons and other leaders learn and help create dialogue on the subject.

- **Congregational Affirmation**

After the appropriate time for sufficient teaching and preaching, teaching and intentional conversation on the subject, the congregation would be asked to approve the move to adopt a Pastoral Team into our leadership organization. If the congregation so approves, then the congregation would have to approve the appropriate by-law changes to incorporate such change into our guiding document.

6. Strengthening Families (Core Value 7 & 2)

The Vision

An important part of shepherding church families involves providing training, mentoring, and support for the students of the church from their earliest days to adulthood. The successful transition of the youth of the church to higher education and career is key to the retention of their faith and quality of their future lives. When our children leave home for college or career they are often challenged by institutions to abandon their values of family and faith in order to adopt rival philosophies. Our goal is to support families in using the broad array of opportunities available to equip the youth of the church to navigate this critical transitional time.

The Plan for Strengthening Families

- **Grow Strong Families**

Provide a seamless ministry by training, mentoring, and supporting the youth of the church through pastoral mentoring, directed bible study, spiritual retreats,

missions activities, and special service projects. Encourage the youth to be active in service to the church community by participation in worship, choir, and local ministry opportunities.

- **Promote Christian Worldview**

Coordinate assistance for those families who seek to send their children to schools that provide a unified Christian worldview reinforcing the one taught at home and church. Prepare them to engage the world from a Christ-centered perspective through coordinated academics, individual character development, and the value of Christian service.

- **Prepare College Bound Students**

Coordinate a program to equip our youth to successfully retain their church and family values as they face the challenges of higher education and career. The focus of this program is to work together with parents and students to provide a strong “send off” by equipping these students to adequately face the many challenges that higher education may pose to their Christian faith.

Create a voluntary position of AFB Education Coordinator to inform parents regarding the many Christian points of contact and Christian ministries available at their college or vocational school of interest.

A Strategy for Facility and Grounds Development

The Vision

In order to be good stewards of our church campus, we must 1) manage our current projects in a coordinated and efficient manner, 2) continue a prudent maintenance program on our current facilities and 3) be prepared to act if in God's providence adjacent land or facilities become available.

1. Parking Lot

Our parking lot continues to be in urgent need of improvement. Our goal had been that the parking lot would be planned, completed by the end 2025 (this included the demolition of the McCrann Property). With the launch of the "Forward in Faith" capital campaign in November 2024, we have raised a substantial amount of funds toward the project. However, due to delays, the work itself has not yet begun. In April 2026 the Committee received bids and accepted one for the work. The construction on the parking lot is expected to begin in early July. The expected duration of the project is no longer than 90 days.

Plans for parking during the construction:

We anticipate a significant challenge for our congregation while the parking lot is being constructed. During this construction, the major portion of our current parking will be unavailable. Our plan is to seek to utilize available parking next to the church building, and arrange for parking nearby from which we can run our own bus as a shuttle and from which people can park and carpool, using the limited parking at the church that will be available. The specifics of this will have to be negotiated and determined at the time nearer to the construction time period.

2. Maintenance and Refurbishing of Educational Building

- Hallway flooring behind sanctuary on first and second floors. The tile flooring on the 2nd floor is much older and worn. The vinyl flooring on the 1st floor is older and no longer matches the flooring in style and color of the office area and welcome center, nor serves to provide a good transition from the sanctuary to the rest of the building. The plan would be to replace the second floor with new tile and the first floor with vinyl plank that matches the office and welcome center.

- A scheduled plan for HVAC replacement. We have a current designated line for HVAC replacement. The goal is to increase that line up to \$60,000 so the Building and Grounds Committee can create a yearly replacement schedule for older units.

3. Construction of Bathroom in Sanctuary Foyer

During the construction of our parking lot, the plan is to install a sewer line to the existing usher closet in the sanctuary foyer. This will allow us within the scope of this long-range plan to convert that space into a family restroom.