



Wellington CHURCH

“By His Grace For His Glory”

A Historical Look at Wellington Church

1. Review of Wellington’s history: Vision and Goals

Many new families who visit and/or choose to worship at Wellington often have questions as to not only how the church began, but why it began. A timeline including the church’s goals, objectives, doctrinal beliefs, etc., are on the website at wellingtonchurch.org, but below is a condensed version we hope is helpful.

A. The primary goal of the Wellington ministry from the beginning has been to recognize Christ as the literal Head of His church (Matthew 16:18), and to recognize those *born again* in Him as His body (1st Corinthians 3:9; Romans 12:4-5), redeemed, reconciled and recreated to the praise and glory of His name (Ephesians 1:11-12).

Therefore Wellington looks to Christ alone for truth, purpose and direction since He is our Head (Ephesians 5:23-32; Colossians 1:13, 17-18a; Ephesians 2:19-22).

Wellington exists to the glory of Christ as we lovingly ‘build up’ the saints (John 13:35; 1st Thessalonians 5:11; 2nd Corinthians 13:11) and make disciples through the systematic teaching of His Word (Bibliology course; Bible Survey; Foundations of the Faith; etc.) in addition to weekly ‘expository’ preaching (1st Timothy 3:15). *Our mission statement is to Promote God’s Glory, Proclaim Christ Jesus, Prepare Believers, and Pursue the Lost.*

B. Shortly after Wellington was organized, a group of men approached our pastor and asked if he would prayerfully identify men who were the most spiritually mature to serve as the first elders (Titus 1:5-9; 1st Timothy 3:17; 2nd Timothy 2:2).

Not long after these four men were identified and began serving as spiritual overseers, they asked our pastor to join them. Throughout the years many godly men have served the Lord with dignity and honor and some have now passed away, others moved away and some are still faithfully serving.

The elders at Wellington do not lord over anyone but seek to prayerfully lead everyone before the throne of Christ (1st Peter 5:1-4). Their oversight is always directed at protecting members (Acts 20:28; 1st Timothy 3:1).

Our elders strive to balance their time at home as husbands and fathers with their oversight of the spiritual growth of the church. Our elders meet once a month and every Sunday for prayer in an effort to be all that the Lord has called them to be as undershepherds of Christ.

As the church grew, the demand for godly leadership through service continued to increase, so Wellington has attempted to develop biblical leadership through monthly studies that include questionnaires regarding spiritual growth and doctrinal convictions - in addition to book studies involving biblical leadership. This 18 to 24 month course seeks to establish accountability and commitment to the Lord's purpose and design for His church as set forth in His Word (John 17:17; 1st Corinthians 4:17; Ephesians 4:12-15).

Wellington's leaders are not elected by men or set apart to serve for small periods of time, but are expected to lead by example with integrity until either they move, their health begins to fail, they are removed for biblical or moral violations of the oath they took before the Lord and the congregation, or for whatever reason are unable to continue to be effective.

Wellington has never tried to create leaders, but only seeks to identify those who, in humility, will lovingly serve others to the glory of Christ through sacrifice, devotion, and submission to His Word (John 13).

The question is sometimes asked: **How are elders or deacons identified?** Anyone within the congregation who recognizes a church member with spiritual maturity and a genuine heart to serve can approach any elder with a recommendation that he be considered. Once church elders have approved individuals they believe demonstrate genuine conversion, spiritual maturity and a humble willingness to lead through service, those nominated are questioned about their interest (Acts 6:1-6). If they have a desire to lead by example, they enter a vetting process to ensure they possess moral character, are doctrinally sound and have a scriptural understanding for how the Lord intends for His body of believers to function (1st Timothy 3:8-13).

Biblically, the church is not a corporation or a democracy, but a Christocracy whereby Christ is the Head (Matthew 16:18; Colossians 1:17-18) and every member of His body honors Him through submission to His word (Ephesians 4:15-16; Hebrews 13:17).

No man is above another, but each must fulfill their role in Christ for any church body to be God-honoring and spiritually healthy.

Every member has a purpose and must function as they have been uniquely gifted (Romans 12:4).

It is only when all members are working together to meet the needs of others to the glory of Christ that the body of Christ truly honors Him. (1st Corinthians 12:12-31).

Once the studies, questionnaires and interviews are complete, their areas of service are identified and they serve during 'a time of testing' (1st Timothy 3:10), usually three to six months.

If they are found faithful and effective during their time of testing, the final step is to introduce them to the congregation and ask if anyone knows of a reason as to why they should not lead. The congregation is given up to three weeks to either approach the elders or the one about whom they have reservations. If there are no objections, an ordination follows whereby new leaders take an oath before the Lord and the church (Christ's body) to serve with humility, integrity and sound doctrine.

The biblical qualifications for elders and deacons are virtually the same, only the job description differs. One (deacons) oversees service ministries, while the other (elders) provides protection and spiritual oversight.

C. As Wellington continued to grow, a "small group" ministry was established to provide accountability and service opportunities in an effort to fulfill the "one another" commands of Scripture (Proverbs 27:17; Ephesians 6:12-13; Hebrews 10:24-25).

D. As a part of the mission outreach, Wellington has been committed to developing young pastors through internships; helping with the cost of education, providing opportunities to learn and gaining hands-on experience through serving within the church (2nd Timothy 2:2).

It has been the vision of Wellington to have young men enter the ministry through internship opportunities, then either fill pulpits at established ministries or become pastors of new congregations that Wellington hopes to start. Wellington's leaders are committed to this Biblical model for encouraging and developing Timothies for ministry.

E. Having been blessed with 6 acres on a highly visible corridor, Wellington's desire is to maximize the use of this property in whatever ways most glorify the Lord.

F. From the beginning, Wellington has always planned to start new congregations (locally and globally) in areas where there is the greatest need and where there is a desire for expository teaching and preaching by providing a pastor, elders, deacons, teachers, and financial support.

Note: For more information regarding the church please refer to our Constitution.

2. Review of Wellington's history: Vocational Commitment

- A. Wayne and Tanya Holcomb have been doing ministry together for close to 50 years. They began at Wellington with a small nucleus of friends from a former ministry in the fall of 1998. After many years of ministry in traditional church settings, changes in biblical doctrine and convictions regarding the ecclesiastical purpose for ministry led to the formation of a new congregation where Christ would literally reign as Head of the church and rule by the authority of His Word which involves elders overseeing spiritual growth; deacons overseeing service ministries and the entire body of Christ serving the Lord in obedience to His Word, according to the leading of His Spirit (Matthew 16:18; Colossians 1:17-18).
- B. Approximately three years into the formation of Wellington, with Wayne preaching, teaching, making disciples, developing leaders and officiating high school and small college basketball in the evenings to supplement his income, Tanya (part-time) leading and developing the children's ministry and with the building of a new facility only a year away, the church was in need of a gifted individual to lead worship as well as provide administrative and pastoral support in preparation for the church's relocation to Nicholasville Road from the rented gymnasium at Rosa Parks Elementary. The leaders searched several weeks for the most qualified person available to meet these specific needs and unanimously agreed upon Kevin Cooper who was serving at another church in the Lexington area. Later, in July 2001, Kevin married Heather Holcomb and became Wayne and Tanya's son-in-law.
- C. Throughout the life of Wellington's ministry several young men have served as interns and full time vocational pastors in a variety of ways including youth, college, discipleship, outreach, and care groups. For information about our current leaders and pastors please visit the "Our Leaders" page on our website at www.wellingtonchurch.org.

3. Review of Wellington's history: Outreach Ministries

New outreach ministries at Wellington begin when the Holy Spirit either lays it on the heart of a church member to start an outreach within the community or a church member introduces Wellington to a ministry that is biblically sound in doctrine and financially in need of support. Wellington has also sent some of our own members out to establish and participate in ministries across the globe. New ministries are added by approaching any one of our elders with a request.

It is our goal to develop deep relationships with those on mission in an effort to carry the gospel to the world, both locally and globally. We do so by supporting our ministry partners prayerfully, financially, and relationally.

The outreach ministries listed below are not the only ones that have been a part of Wellington's efforts to

“Go make disciples, teaching them to obey all (Christ) commanded” (Matthew 28:19-20) but this list serves as a modest timeline for the more significant attempts to faithfully proclaim God's Word (2nd Corinthians 5:20-21).

1. **2003**, Wellington sent their first mission outreach team to the Dominican Republic to construct church facilities and provide children's VBS lessons.
2. **2004**, Wellington partnered with TMAI to further the teaching of God's Word in Honduras. The Master's Academy International established a seminary in Seguatepeque and Wellington began partnering with local pastors associated with the seminary. We built an educational building, provided medical and dental services and sent several service teams that not only worked in the clinic but did outreach in the community through two local churches (conducting VBS; school programs; etc.) After sending several short-term outreach teams over nearly a ten year period to Honduras, the political climate changed and we had to discontinue visits for a period of time; however, we have maintained financial support for the churches on an as needed basis.
3. **2006**, Wellington began a pastors' conference in Aurangabad, India that provided for more than 800 pastors to further their education and training in the expository teaching of God's Word. During this 12 year ministry, the church also supported an orphanage. Due to changes in the local administration, and after providing numerous Bible courses that were translated into Marathi and Hindi, then circulated throughout the state of Maharashtra, Wellington redirected their efforts to other ministries.
4. **2007**, a local men's Bible study was started at Panera Bread to promote not just fellowship but grounding in God's Word. The "Wake-Up Call" now meets Wednesdays at 6:00 a.m. at Wellington for any men wanting to grow in their knowledge of the Lord and their walk with Him.
5. **2009**, Wellington began supporting a local Hispanic church, providing VBS materials, lessons, and school supplies. This ministry was discontinued due to division within that church.
6. **2012**, the AWANA ministry was added for the purpose of encouraging Bible training and memorization among children ages 2-12. This ministry continues on Wednesday nights at Wellington in the fall and spring.
7. **2012**, Overstone, a local homeschool co-op for the Charlotte Mason approach to education, began with Wellington's support.
8. **2014**, Justin and Laura Schriver, members of Wellington, began ministering through Cru in Kazakhstan and Wellington has provided support through financing a portion of Justin's continuing education in Muslim studies. Justin has in recent years established a small home-church for the purpose of discipling students reached through the Cru ministry. Wellington continues to partner with Justin and Laura through the support of the home-church.

9. **2017**, Wellington began supporting a church plant in Fort Collins, Colorado. We are currently providing monthly financial support to help underwrite the Overland Church plant as they work towards autonomy.
10. **2018**, with the pastoral conferences completed in India, the Lord opened the door for Wellington to begin a similar training for pastoral development in Ghana, West Africa. Approximately 100 pastors attended the first conference in February, 2018.
11. **2018**, We reconnected with Shannon Hurley, who is establishing the Sufficiency of Scriptures ministry in Uganda. A few years ago, when this ministry first began, a group of Africans confiscated the initial campus, but now the SOS ministries is working with a trusted group of Africans and Wellington was able to contribute \$15,000 that, through a matching fund, was increased to \$30,000 for the building of a worship center where both daily worship as a church and monthly pastor conferences can be held. Wellington continues to support the Shepherd's training Institute portion of SOS ministries. Just this year we were able to be part of a \$500,000 matching grant that allows for the construction of family dormitories where pastor's and their families can stay during their two year seminary training.
12. **2018**, Wellington remains partnered with Emmanuel Baptist Church in Siguatepeque, Honduras that is associated with the Master's Academy International. Historically we have contributed to the building of an educational building and a worship center. We also have sent several teams to Siguatepeque to work with Pastor Melvin Romero and his wife Alejandra over the past 14 years. Our goal for the church in Honduras is church growth and pastoral training.
13. **2018**, a few years ago a Wellington family, the Zgodas, moved to North Carolina where their daughter, Stacey, married Ryan Fischer, a graduate of Master's University with a B.A. in Biblical Languages. Ryan and Stacey Fischer, who now have four children, moved to Bulgaria in January 2019 to begin a marketplace ministry through APEX and Wellington has become one of the first churches to provide monthly support for this outreach.
14. **2019**, Wellington began partnering with Aaron and Stephanie Boon and The Grace Mission in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Aaron labors in discipling men to read and teach the Bible faithfully while at the same time training them in farming practices to give them skills to provide for their families. These young men can then go back to make disciples in their communities. Stephanie oversees the Sifa Threads ministry that focuses on discipling young women.
15. **2022**, Wellington continues to support our ministry partners in Ft. Collins, CO, Bulgaria, Honduras, Kazakhstan, Tanzania, and Uganda. The Covid years proved to be challenging on these families and ministries. However, the Lord has been faithful in providing and growing his church through these missions. Our goal is to strengthen these families and missions through our ongoing support. Church planting/strengthening and pastoral training continue to be our focus.
 - Wellington's outreach objective has always been to make disciples through shepherding those the Lord sends to us as well as reaching out to those around us with the gospel. We seek to be faithfully effective in both areas through teaching all the Lord has commanded, knowing He will be with us to the end of the age (Matthew 28:20).

16. **2024**, There has been tremendous growth in our missionary partners in pastoral training and church planting. The church in Colorado has planted again in Durango, and has plans for another plant as well. Hundreds are being saved in villages in Tanzania as a result of the pastor training. Persecution continues to increase in Central Asia, but as a result God is strengthening pastors and churches in unity. Bulgaria has established a church plant and they continue to grow.
17. **2024**, Wellington further established a Mission Council who has the responsibility of executing the Wellington Missions Policy. This team meets monthly to manage and oversee support of our missionary partners and to increase awareness with our local congregation.
18. **2025** - Wellington added a new missionary from Spain and expanded support for church plants in Honduras. At this time, our missionaries to Bulgaria have needed to return to the states due to medical reasons. We pray the roots they helped to plant in Sofia will flourish to the glory of God. Scott Smith currently serves as the elder with oversight of our Mission Council and Missionaries.

Wellington budgets a significant amount each year for outreach opportunities. However, we exercise biblical wisdom and prayerful discernment as to how and where those resources are used. In addition we require financial accountability from everyone we trust to use this support for the teaching of God's Word, because faith comes by hearing (Romans 10:17).

Faithful outreach and responsible stewardship are both biblical principles that must go hand in hand. That's the reason for not measuring the success of our outreach by how much money is spent or how many agencies are supported, but rather by how faithful and effective we've been to involve our members in taking the gospel to the world around us, locally and globally.

It takes a great deal of effort to faithfully engage the body of Christ in effectively fulfilling the great commission (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8) and being financially and doctrinally responsible to the Lord for how accurately His Word is being proclaimed, but this more difficult challenge seems well worth it to the Wellington leadership.

Our motivation for outreach has always been relational and gospel-centered. The effectiveness of outreach is directly related to making disciples through lovingly sharing the gospel, as we want all our members to hear, "Well done My good and faithful servant" (Matthew 25:21).

4. Review of Wellington's history: Financial Accountability

Since we are patterned after churches in scripture and do not elect church members to boards that debate then vote on expenses, our finance ministry has always been a tool of accountability that functions under the biblical authority of the elders who serve as the spiritual leaders of the flock (Hebrews 13:17; 1st Peter 5:1-4).

A. Here is how Wellington functions with financial integrity:

The finance 'ministry team' keeps excellent records of giving, deposits, and expenses.

Offerings collected on Sunday mornings are counted and recorded by a minimum of two deacons immediately after they are collected and another individual double checks their records for accuracy. Checks and cash are secured in a safe location and promptly deposited into the bank.

A designated individual on the finance team records deposits and payments into Quickbooks online accounting software. This individual also issues payments electronically and prepares hard copy checks for signature as needed. Most bill paying is done electronically; however, when paper checks are issued, signatures are provided by designated deacons as no one in the finance ministry has check signing authority. For added security and to maintain integrity above reproach, only a selected number of deacons have check signing authority.

A designated individual also makes sure the online giving from Simple Church (our 3rd party vendor) is recorded accurately.

Another individual on the finance team reviews a summary list of the inputs and reconciles all bank transactions monthly with the bank statements, looking for any expenses that stand out as unusually large or possibly recorded in the wrong category. That individual creates detailed reports for review by the finance ministry team, a summary of which is provided to the eldership, along with a yearly report made available to the congregation.

The eldership and finance ministry hold each other accountable to make the best decisions possible for the church which functions under the ultimate authority of Christ, Who is our Head.

Summary reports are provided for ease of understanding and clarity with information obtained from all detailed transactions and reconciled to the detailed report; then these reports are made available upon request as any question about details is always welcomed.

The current officers of the Wellington Church corporation which is the official documentation required by the state of Kentucky are: President: Ron Ring, Secretary: Richard Whitaker, and Treasurer: David Ray. None of these individuals have check signing authority, but have authority to sign legal documents on behalf of the church.

B. Preparing and Monitoring Budgets:

Expenses incurred from previous years are used to establish a proposed budget for the new year, while also seeking input from those who oversee the various ministries requiring financial support. After receiving input and reviewing changes that are made, a proposed summary budget is submitted to the elders for approval.

Everyone overseeing ministries is expected to function within their approved budgeted guidelines and are held accountable by the finance ministry who tracks spending. Any deacon who is not sure what has been budgeted for his ministry can easily and quickly obtain this information from the finance ministry.

Exceptions can be made if a ministry discovers necessary expenditures will exceed the allocated budget, by first consulting with the finance team to see if funds are available.

If a ministry wants to spend a significant amount of their budget all at once, they are also asked to check with finance to make sure funds are available at that time.

C. Special needs and projects:

Each month the finance ministry puts a designated amount into a “rainy day” savings account should a need arise that requires thousands of dollars to be spent, such as replacing the roof, resurfacing the parking lot, replacing an air conditioning unit, ice machine, etc.

When large expenditures are required, bids are sought and provided to the finance team for approval to protect any one individual from being responsible for a major expense.

Sometimes these expenditures can be anticipated and included in the budget, but sometimes unexpected expenses can occur without warning.

Ron Ring currently serves as the liaison between finance and the eldership.

5. Review of Wellington’s history: Discipleship Ministry

Our goal at Wellington has always been to make disciples (Matthew 28:18-20) by teaching obedience to all the Lord has commanded that we might build up the body (Jude 20-21) using our gifts to serve others (1st Peter 4:10) and speaking the truth in love (Ephesians 4:13, 15).

As Mark Dever has pointed out: Local churches exist to display God’s glory to the nations. We do that by fixing our eyes on the gospel of Christ, trusting Him for salvation, then loving one another with God’s holiness, unity, and love. We display God’s glory by obedience to His Word; therefore, discipling can easily be defined as helping others follow Jesus.

Perhaps the best way to describe our discipleship is by quoting Christ, "If anyone would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me." (Mark 8:34)

From Wellington's beginning, our approach has been to help others follow Jesus. We all know that faith comes from hearing the Word of God. So we hold high the Scriptures (2nd Timothy 3:16-17).

We approach discipleship through expositional teaching and preaching. From our inception Wellington began making disciples through teaching foundational courses like Bibliology, Overview of Scripture, Fundamentals of the Faith, and A Clear Understanding of Genesis, in addition to verse by verse preaching during worship.

We now have additional discipleship ministries for men, women, college students, teens and children; in home Bible studies, and Sunday gatherings, because we are encouraging every Christian to first be a follower, then a teacher and a discipler of others.

"It is very easy to build churches in which seekers congregate; it is very hard to build churches in which Biblical faith is maturing into genuine discipleship." David Wells

6. Review of Wellington's history: Construction of New Facility

Wellington's current building, constructed in 2001-2002, was the result of trusting the Lord to provide the necessary funds through the faithful and loving commitment of His people, though they were small in number. Most of the initial families had made a financial contribution towards the expansion of their former church. When that church chose not to relocate, with proof of their commitment, this small nucleus was allowed to apply their contributions to the purchase of six acres at 3224 Lexington Road (\$300,000).

Having paid for land in cash, the Wellington leadership began evaluating how to provide the most functional facility possible, for worship as well as use during the week. They decided upon a multipurpose construction whereby a gym surrounded by classrooms could be used by both the church and a Christian school.

Prior to construction, Wellington leaders met with Trinity Christian Academy's (TCA) board knowing they were seeking to expand their school to include 9th-12th grades. Believing a facility could adequately be shared by a small church and a startup high school, Wellington entered into a five year lease with TCA that included an option for an additional five years.

The combination of lease revenue with shared utility costs along with the giving commitment of faithful members enabled Wellington to build the current facility for approximately \$2 million.

Over the next ten years, the growth of the church and school required additional space for both ministries. TCA was spread out in three different locations, making it difficult for parents who had children in various grades so they combined their middle school and high school at another church that could provide additional facilities.

From 2012 to 2016 Wellington continued growing and additional classroom space, specifically for children, was badly needed. Wanting to provide the necessary space for everyone the Lord was bringing to Wellington for discipleship, the elders appointed a committee consisting of a combination of elders, deacons, pastors, and members to explore the various options for expansion.

The committee was asked to determine the best approach for expanding the facility, specifically classrooms for children. Two basic approaches were considered. One was to use a builder and/or construction manager with his own architect, while the alternative was to hire an independent architect who would work directly for the church with whichever construction company the church chose.

During the process three construction companies and three architects were interviewed and it was determined the best approach was to utilize the services and advice of an architect who would work on behalf of the church. A local architect, Jerry Herndon, who has 38 years experience and was well-known to many at Wellington with a good reputation for working with churches, was chosen.

Herndon was asked to give Wellington a conceptual design for a 'master plan' that could: **1)** be built in stages so the church could be financially responsible; **2)** would meet the congregation's existing needs; **3)** and would ultimately utilize all six acres for God's glory.

After continued prayer, in early 2017 the eldership decided it was wise stewardship to pay down the remaining mortgage on the first phase and become as creative as possible in addressing the lack of space. While existing pastors, along with a host of volunteers, have been trying to meet the growing needs for discipleship, the elders decided an additional vocational pastor was greatly needed and they were trusting the Lord would provide creative logistics with existing facilities to meet the needs of our children's ministry at this time.

Current Update:

At this time, no date has been set for the construction of additional facilities. It has always been the goal of our current leaders to meet the spiritual needs of Wellington's members, while also being financially responsible, so we covet your prayers as we prayerfully work very hard to honor the Lord through this ministry that we have been given by His grace.

"Having this ministry by the grace of God, we do not lose heart." 2nd Corinthians 4:1

We are fortunate to have very practical plans available for expansion when the timing is right. The amount of time devoted to researching the best approach, choosing an architect, and paying for the initial drawings has been a wise investment and places Wellington in a very positive position to move forward when the Holy Spirit makes it clear that the time is right. Whether that results in expanding the existing facility to accommodate future growth or it results in starting new congregations on a smaller scale, the elders are always open and sensitive to the Lord's leading and they greatly covet your prayers and support.

7. A Review of Wellington's History: The Church's Name

When the church's small nucleus first began worshiping, we chose the name Wellington Christian Church believing this name would not only identify our location but the fact that we were a non-denominational body of Christians. Our previous church had an agreement to purchase 20 acres from the company responsible for the Wellington development. When that church decided not to relocate, we as the nucleus from that church assumed we could purchase the property and start a new church.

However, the developer claimed all agreements were with the church, not the nucleus from that church and refused to honor the two year old commitment. Though the land was pulled from beneath us, rather than changing the name, it was recommended that we retain the name "Wellington" to remind us that the Lord was sovereignly in control of our future and directing our path, not man.

After four and a half years in a school building, the church moved to its current location at 3224 Lexington Road. Soon after, we received feedback from visitors that our name was misleading and could even be a hindrance to some families worshiping with us. The issue had to do, not with us being Christian, but that there were a number of churches who were using the word "Christian" in their name but did not share our conviction for expository preaching and who did not embrace the reformational truths of grace that acknowledge the sovereignty of Almighty God. After countless discussions and hours of praying, the church leaders realized the term "Christian" as a name had become a stumbling block to many and was not a clear representation of the strong biblical values and convictions of our church.

Since the church was committed to "expository preaching" the leaders felt a more transparent approach would be to identify Wellington as a Bible church, so Wellington Christian Church became Wellington Bible Church. However, some bible churches do not practice expository preaching and teaching and differ in doctrine. Not wanting to create another misleading identity, the leaders decided it was best to eliminate middle names altogether. Therefore, the current name is simply Wellington Church.