



Have you heard that we have a 2020 Vision?

Well, we do, and it's not our grade on a theological eye test! This snappy title is Binkley's name for a process that has worked to identify a few particular projects in our sights right now (our close-up vision, you might say) that will bring into focus several of the general goals of our congregation's long-term vision. It's all happened in plain view (these vision metaphors are hard to resist!), but in a relatively short time; the Council first learned of the Vision 2020 process at its September 2018 meeting.

The process so far:

At three distinct gatherings in September, Sonnie, our moderator, and senior pastor Marcus McFaul presented six goals that make up our long-term vision. Several of these goals were discerned in broad outline during the Transition Team's many congregational conversations (TT served from spring 2014 to July 2016), and a couple were added after Marcus was called as pastor. Sonnie and Marcus invited small-group discussion and brainstorming of specific proposals, with implementation details, that would move us towards the goals. These are the goals:

- ◆ to cultivate engagement and growth of ministry with families;
- ◆ to cultivate a public witness of the gospel through policy, advocacy, and cultural engagement;
- ◆ to cultivate and model what it means to be a teaching congregation;
- ◆ to cultivate a vital senior ministry;
- ◆ to cultivate and offer a variety of options for worship and spiritual practices;
- ◆ to cultivate community through stewardship and sustainability.

By early October, over 40 proposals had been offered; these were written up and passed along to all committee and cluster members, who chose among them one or two proposals for the goal(s) that fit their particular cluster/committee charge most closely. The ten proposals that came out were now ready for another congregational discussion. On Saturday, Nov. 17, the congregation was invited to hear a "presenter" of each proposal describe the idea and its implementation; then, after small-group discussion, those who attended "voted" with colored sticky-notes, ranking their top four among the proposals. And these are the four proposals that were most highly favored.

What are the proposals?

1. Quarterly service projects (presenter, Ellen Stutts).

Four times a year, we want to do an intergenerational service project, designed so that the entire family could take part. These could take different forms such as an outdoor cleanup project for Earth Day, assembling toiletry kits for a woman's shelter, or a diaper drive. The projects are limited only by our imagination! We're looking for a few good Binkleyites to:

- ◆ Come up with ideas for projects
- ◆ Help coordinate with applicable committees (e.g. Earth Ministries for an Earth Day cleanup project)
- ◆ Recruit volunteers to help on the day of the project

2. An "Action/Reflection" church school curriculum for children through 5th grade (presenter, Miles Highsmith)

We propose creating a curriculum for the church school hour that integrates "action" (projects of service to those in need) with "reflection" (the spiritual thread/sacred story that connects us to this need, and our church's mission). For example:

- ◆ Baking items at Binkley for Meals on Wheels

(Continued on page 2)

- ◆ Gardening at Binkley
- ◆ Service projects outside of Binkley? IFC?
 - ◆ Conversations with Binkley members with experience in social action, overcoming challenges
- ◆ Learning skills that are handy in social action work: hammering? Cooking?
- ◆ Other ideas –

3. A “Year of Compassion” at Binkley (presenter, Meredith Bratcher)

We suggest a year of concentrated teaching and learning about the core value of compassion by:

- ◆ A conference that addresses compassion in Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and Buddhist faith and practice, led by notable speakers, and open to the community
- ◆ Monthly presentations, with discussion, that focus on compassion in various arenas of public life.

Just some examples:

- ◆ *Compassion in education: teaching for long-term growth* – Waldorf School? Teachers in prisons?
- ◆ *Compassion in medical care: low-cost clinics in town?*

- ◆ *Compassion in treatment of criminal behavior: a speaker on restorative justice?*
- ◆ *Compassion in business: a company built on fairness for suppliers* – Ten Thousand Villages?

4. A program for Orange County Bail Bond Justice and Support (presenters, Tom Fewel and Kimberly Brewer)

We propose a four part process (1) training volunteers to observe court proceedings where bail bonds are considered; (2) documenting issues related to equity in setting bail bond amounts; (3) developing and facilitating an Orange County Participatory Defense Program including family members, employers, and community members; and (4) exploring possibilities for developing and funding an Orange County Bail Bond Fund (modeled on much work being done in Durham County).

Where do we learn more, and find out how we can help?

On Sunday, January 6, please come to the Narthex between 10:30 and 11:00, and after the 11:00 worship service to learn more about each proposal from the presenters. In the meantime, of course, you can always ask directly! There is plenty of room in each proposal for your ideas, energy, and inventiveness!

Questions? Contact [Sonnie VanSant](#), Moderator.

