

TAMPA BAY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

STATE OF THE CHURCH ADDRESS

PRESENTED TO
THE CONGREGATION
OF THE
TAMPA BAY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

BY
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State of the Church Address

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to our annual *State of the Church* Banquet this evening! I am so glad that you came! We have come here to glorify God by reflecting on the great things he has done in our midst over the past 18 years of my tenure here at the Tampa Bay Presbyterian Church.

Victoria 2020 Vision

In July 2003, a little more than 17 years ago, several members from our then-daughter church, Ven Con Nosotros Church in Ciudad Victoria, Mexico, visited us for a glorious week of outreach. I still vividly remember Dr. Alvarez, the pastor of Ven Con Nosotros Church, talking about the *Victoria 2020 Vision*, which was their vision for the city of Ciudad Victoria. Their vision was that God would raise up 20 Presbyterian Churches and 20 Social Projects by the year 2020 in Ciudad Victoria, Mexico. Remarkably, as you are all aware, last month several members from TBPC attended the particularization of the 22nd Presbyterian Church in Ciudad Victoria! Our church has directly helped in the birth of 4 of those churches! In addition, there are now 20 Social Projects ministering to the people of Ciudad Victoria!

TBPC's 2020 Vision

As I listened to Dr. Alvarez 17 years ago, I remember thinking, “What is *TBPC's 2020 Vision* for our church?” After prayer, reflection and meditation, I shared the following *TBPC's 2020 Vision* with our church family in my annual *State of the Church Address* in 2003:

We envision a church where God is glorified in every area of our church. TBPC will strive to do everything with excellence in order to bring glory to God.

We envision a church that has a “God-sized” vision that will take God-glorifying faith and God-glorifying obedience to accomplish that vision. We want to attempt something so great for God that it is doomed to failure—unless God be in it.

We envision a church that is true to the Scriptures, faithful to the Reformed faith, and obedient to the Great Commission.

We envision a church that has a great commitment to both the Great Commandment (Matthew 22:37-40) and the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20).

We envision a church that is healthy, and that is committed to developing healthy relationships with God and with one another. Our church will be a place where the hurting, the depressed, the disappointed, the lonely, the confused, the guilty, and the sinful find forgiveness, love, acceptance, help, hope, guidance, encouragement, support, and salvation only in Christ.

We envision a church where every person in our New Tampa community has an opportunity to hear the good news of the gospel.

We envision a church where hundreds of people gather each week to worship the triune God in a manner that is biblical, historical and contemporary, where the Word of God is preached each week systematically and expositionally.

We envision a church that welcomes hundreds of members into the fellowship of our church family, where we are loving, learning, laughing, and living in harmony with each other.

We envision a church that develops believers to spiritual maturity through preaching, Bible studies, seminars, conferences, retreats, and a planned, discipleship development process.

We envision a church that equips every believer for ministry by helping them find a place of significant service in God's kingdom.

We envision a church that empowers every believer to know his or her life mission in God's kingdom.

We envision a church that trains scores of believers for leadership in God's kingdom.

We envision a church that sends out scores of believers on short-term and career missions projects and ministry.

We envision a church that will plant 5 daughter churches by 2020, and then after that to plant at least 1 daughter church every other year.

We envision a church that has a pre-kindergarten through middle school that is classical and covenantal.

We envision a church that has outstanding facilities that meet our entire ministry needs. The facilities will include a sanctuary seating at least 600 persons, numbers of various-sized classrooms, a multipurpose fellowship hall/gymnasium, playground, and adequate parking.

TBPC's 2020 Vision statement has been our guide over the years. God has graciously led us and we have followed what he has called us to be and to do as a church. Let's examine a little more closely where we are today as a church.

THE PURPOSES OF TBPC'S MINISTRY

A key issue for us has been, and is, church *health* and not church *growth*. It has been our conviction that as we have concentrated on the spiritual health of our church, - our church has also grown numerically.

We also wanted to discern God's vision and purpose for TBPC so that tradition, personality, finances, programs, buildings, events, or even seekers would not drive TBPC. Rather, TBPC would be a church that is driven by God's purposes. That way, a change in pastoral leadership would mean that the church would be able to continue carrying out its God-given purposes, rather than have to redefine its purpose with new leadership.

Over the years, we have been committed to growing *people* with a *process* rather than growing a *church* through *programs*. This process involved helping people to: (1) know Christ, (2) grow in Christ, (3) serve Christ, (4) share Christ, and (5) worship Christ. The primary goal over the years has been to produce disciples, and not simply produce bodies, budgets, and buildings.

Sixteen years ago, as a result of working with the consultants from Vision Planners, we clarified the purposes of TBPC's ministry. We defined the Mission Statement of the Tampa Bay Presbyterian Church as follows:

To bring people to Jesus Christ and *membership* in his church family, develop them to Christlike *maturity*, equip them for their *ministry* in the church and life *mission* in the world, in order to *magnify* God's name.

Using the five concentric circles of commitment (see figure A), our goal has been to move people from the community to the core. We have moved people from the community to the crowd, from the crowd to the congregation, from the congregation to the committed, from the committed to the core, and then from the core back into the community again.

The community is where the purpose of *evangelism* takes place, the crowd is where the purpose of *worship* takes place, the congregation is where the purpose of *fellowship* takes place, the committed is where the purpose of *discipleship* takes place, and the core is where the purpose of *service* takes place.

Consequently, we committed ourselves to five major, equally important purposes: evangelism, worship, fellowship, discipleship and service. The following key words summarize the five purposes for TBPC:

Mission: Proclaiming God's Word through *evangelism*.

Magnification: Celebrating God's presence in *worship*.

Membership: Assimilating God's family into our *fellowship*.

Maturity: Developing God's people through *discipleship*.

Ministry: Demonstrating God's love through *service*.

Let's examine where we are in each of these purposes.

Mission/Evangelism

The purpose of mission has to do with evangelism, which takes place in the community.

In 2004 TBPC hired Pastor George Whitefield as the Pastor for Outreach and Youth. Two years later, in 2006, the ministry was going so well that we were able to hire a full-time Pastor for each position. Pastor George Whitefield, who is still on staff, continued serving as the Pastor for Outreach, while Pastor Robert Murray McCheyne joined the staff as the Pastor for Youth. Pastor George Whitefield's remarkable gifts in evangelism have stimulated strong and steady growth at TBPC.

There are now approximately 75,000 residents living in our target community (which consists of zip codes 33647 and 33543). Our target community has almost doubled since 2003, when 40,962 people lived there.

The Tampa Bay Presbyterian Church is well known in our community, not only because of our highly visible location on Bruce B. Downs Boulevard (which is now a major eight-lane road), but mainly because of our many community outreach events.

Our ministry community consists of almost 10,000 names. These are the names of people who have attended TBPC (and registered their names and addresses with us) at least two times in a year.

In order to achieve such a highly effective outreach into our community, TBPC has invested significantly in outreach and evangelism. 25% of all giving to TBPC (excluding giving to the Building Fund) now goes to some form of evangelism and missions ministry. Giving in this area is defined as giving to all ministries that reach those who are not yet members of the church: evangelism, missions (local, national, and international), church planting, General Assembly, Presbytery, and mercy ministries.

Here are two ways we prepare our members to reach people in our community:

Class 401

Class 401 is designed to help TBPC members discover their life mission in God's kingdom. God has designed each one of us with unique abilities, interests, gifts and personalities. In addition, he has called each one of us to some form of vocational service, in order to advance his kingdom. Scores of members have gone through this class in order to learn how they can serve God more effectively in his kingdom.

Evangelism Training

TBPC utilizes a number of different evangelism training tools. We use Evangelism Explosion for our basic evangelism training. However, in addition, we also provide seminars in Friendship Evangelism, simple witnessing, and learning how to share one's testimony. About 50% of our congregation has received some form of evangelism training, which is designed to make our members more effective in sharing the gospel.

Here are some of the ways in which we have made contact with people in our community:

Bridge Events

The primary method we use to impact our community is through a variety of regularly scheduled community-wide events. We call these "Bridge Events" because they are designed to build a bridge between our church and our community. These events have become quite large, and include Christmas Eve services, Easter services, Night Light activities for children and families (which is a safe alternative for children at Halloween), as well as other seasonal emphases, concerts, and dramatic productions. With the opening of our new sanctuary in 2011 we started the Youth Concert Series, which has touched hundreds of teenagers in our community. In 2013 we introduced the Winter Orchestral Concert Series. These classical concerts are particularly appealing to some of the older members of our community, and they have become very popular. Then, in 2015 we began the Summer Season of Christian Plays, which has appealed to people of all ages.

Cultural Engagement

Over the years we have hosted debates on important political, social, cultural, and spiritual issues in order to speak Biblical truth to our culture. Groups have been formed to

facilitate involvement in social action issues, such as life chains, pregnancy crisis clinics, and sanctity of marriage, among others.

Outreach Meeting

In addition to the Bridge Events, our Saturday night Outreach Meeting is reaching hundreds of people in our community each week. This meeting, which began in 2012, is specifically designed for seekers. The entire meeting is designed to present the claims of Christ to our postmodern culture. We strive to offer the community something that they cannot get anywhere else. And while TBPC members regularly bring their friends to the Outreach Meeting, they understand that it is not a substitute for the Sunday morning worship service.

Seeker Groups

For many years we have had Seeker Groups. These groups are designed for those who want to dialogue further about the claims of Christ. Hosted in a highly relational and comfortable setting at the church or in homes, inquiring seekers dialogue with well-trained believers about the claims of Christ. Believers who are involved in leading these seeker groups have received training in evangelism and apologetics. This avenue of outreach into our community has proven to be highly effective.

Missions Ministry

TBPC does not support as many missionaries as one might expect of a church our size. The reason for this is that we prefer to support fewer missionaries who carry our Reformed distinctives into their work very generously. Our missionaries serve primarily with Mission to the World. About a dozen TBPC members are now in vocational missions ministry.

We have been involved in Ciudad Victoria for more than 20 years now. As mentioned earlier, 22 churches have been planted, and TBPC has actively supported 4 of those church plants. Over 150 TBPC members have visited and participated in short-term missions work in Ciudad Victoria.

TBPC has also sent short-term missionaries to a number of different places, most notably to Fairmont, WV. In fact, in 2004 TBPC gave \$5,000 to the Dayspring Camp in Fairmont, WV that now sports a “TBPC Cabin”! Several hundred adults and teenagers have experienced some form of short-term missions ministry. This past summer, for example, 55 adults and 75 youth participated in missions trips to Mexico, West Virginia, South Africa, and China, which is just a small number of countries we have ministered in over the years.

Since one of the signs of a church’s health is its sending capacity and not its seating capacity, we constantly ask ourselves, “How many people are being mobilized for the Great Commission?”

Church Planting

TBPC has had the privilege of planting 5 daughter churches. It is our belief that the most effective way to penetrate communities and cultures with the gospel of Jesus Christ is through church planting.

For the past 14 years we have had a number of church planting apprentices at TBPC who have worked with a core group at TBPC for a few years, and then taken the core group and planted a church. Although not an apprentice, Dr. John Clark planted a church in Dade City in 2009. Pastor John Knox became our first church planting apprentice, and planted a church in Land O' Lakes in 2013. Then, Pastor John Wycliffe began his church planting apprenticeship with us and planted a church in Temple Terrace in 2016. After that, Pastor William Farrell planted a church in south Tampa Palms in 2018. And just last year, in 2019, Pastor John Hus planted a church in east Lutz.

In addition to our own church planting efforts, TBPC gives sacrificially to church planting in the Presbytery.

Multicultural Outreach

According to a recent US Census Survey, our target community is approximately 70% White, 12% Hispanic, 7% African-American, and 11% Asian. Our goal has always been that our church would reflect the ethnic groups of our community. The Lord has worked in remarkable ways by enabling us to have an Asian Ministry as well as a Hispanic Ministry. There are almost 100 persons in the Asian Ministry, and a similar number in the Hispanic Ministry. Pastor Watchman Chang, who joined our staff in 2008, serves as the Pastor of the Asian Ministry. Pastor Jose Sanchez joined our staff in 2010 and serves as the Pastor of the Hispanic Ministry.

The Asian Ministry and the Hispanic Ministry meet separately during the Sunday school hour for a service in their mother language. Then, they join with the entire congregation for one of the morning worship services. The addition of these multicultural ministries has been a wonderful blessing of the Lord to all of us.

It is not our intention to plant Asian-speaking or Hispanic-speaking churches, but rather to embrace and enjoy the multi-ethnic groups that God has brought to TBPC.

Magnification/Worship

The purpose of magnification has to do with worship, which takes place in the crowd.

The crowd consists of all those who attend our Sunday morning worship services. Consisting mostly of believers, we also have a number of non-believers at these services.

The Lord brought Pastor John Newton to us as the Pastor of Worship and Music in 2007. He has enabled us to grow enormously in our ability to worship our great God.

Worship Services

We now have three Sunday morning worship services. None of the services are identical. However, all three services are based on the regulative principle of worship, so that the services are biblical, historical, and contemporary.

We have about 1,000 people worshipping at TBPC on Sunday mornings. Approximately 175 attend the 8:00 a.m. worship service, 325 attend the 9:30 a.m. worship service, and 500 attend the 11:00 a.m. worship service. In order to accommodate some hearing impaired persons in our community, we have been able to provide sign language for the past 5 years during the 11:00 a.m. worship service.

Due to the fact that we have a Hispanic Ministry and an Asian Ministry, we schedule occasional multicultural services, where we sing songs, recite prayers or confessions in Spanish or one of the Asian languages, and we are grateful that we serve a God who is saving the nations.

Music Ministry

TBPC has an outstanding Music Ministry, thanks to John Newton, our Pastor of Worship and Music. He oversees the 55-member adult choir, the 25-member youth choir, the 40-member children choir, the instrumentalists, the praise and worship band, and all of the special music for the worship services. In addition, he conducts several orchestral and choral concerts a year, which not only ministers to our crowd but also to our community.

Membership/Fellowship

The purpose of membership has to do with fellowship, which takes place in the congregation. Several ministry areas take place under the purpose of membership.

One of the hallmarks of TBPC has been loving relationships. Because we have a strong commitment to Reformed and Biblical theology, we have a commitment to healthy and loving relationships. Conflict is not absent from our relationships, but we deal with conflict biblically, with honesty and humility.

One of the gifts that God sent to us in 2012 is Pastor Richard Baxter. He has extraordinary skills in shepherding and caring for people. God has used Pastor Baxter mightily in helping our congregation to grow in love for God and also for one another.

Class 101

Class 101 is designed to introduce inquirers to the membership requirements at TBPC. All believers go through this class in order to become members at TBPC. We now have approximately 800 communicant members at TBPC. We have had many more members at TBPC, but over the years we have had the privilege of sending about 200 members out to help birth our daughter churches.

Member Care Ministry

Our Member Care Ministry takes care of many of the needs of our growing and diverse congregation, such as pastoral care, hospital visitation, meals, counseling, support groups, weddings, funerals, benevolence support, and so on. Pastor Richard Baxter has trained scores of members over the years so that the members of our church are able to deliver an extraordinarily high level of care to those who need it. This large ministry is absolutely vital, and scores of members minister to hundreds of people each year.

Prayer Ministry

TBPC has grown in the area of prayer over the years. We now have a team of Prayer Warriors who lead the Prayer Ministry of our church. There are set times of prayer, as well as a number of different prayer groups.

Our Daily Staff Prayer Meeting occurs each weekday. The staff meets for a brief time of prayer each weekday to pray about the upcoming day, as well as to pray for spe-

cial prayer concerns. (This daily prayer meeting has been going on for about 17 years now.)

The “Engine Room” pray-ers meet during each worship service to petition the Lord to work mightily in the worship service.

The Prayer Chain continues to inform volunteers of special prayer concerns.

The e-Prayer Alert goes out to the entire church family via email whenever there is an immediate and pressing prayer concern.

We also have an annual Week of Prayer.

In addition, all of the ministries have scheduled their own seasons of prayer for their ministries.

The reason for all of this prayer is the recognition that the gospel advances through preaching *and* prayer. We believe that prayer is foundational, and not simply supplemental, to all that we do as a church.

Fellowship and Social Events

Our church has always enjoyed fellowship and social events. This ministry oversees Family Night Dinners on Wednesday nights, as well as other all-church meals. Fortunately, our new state-of-the-art kitchen, just off the fellowship hall/gymnasium, enables us to handle these events far more smoothly than in our “old” kitchen!

Maturity/Discipleship

The purpose of maturity has to do with discipleship, which takes place among the committed.

In 2009 the Lord enabled us to hire Pastor John Calvin as the Pastor of Maturity. He is an extraordinarily gifted teacher with the heart of a pastor. People have been greatly helped by his powerful exposition of God’s Word, whether in the classroom or the pew.

Class 201

This class is designed to help our members grow in Christ and develop spiritual maturity. We teach believers what it *means* to grow in Christ, and also *how* to grow in Christ. About 400 of our present members have graduated from this class.

Adult Education Ministries

Adult Education ministries fall under maturity, and are responsible for all Bible study ministries, Wednesday night Bible Study, Sunday school, seminars, and Resource Center that are designed to help our congregation mature in Christ.

In addition, the sign language team provides ministry to hearing impaired persons in the 11:00 a.m. worship service and a number of our Sunday school classes.

Annual Bible Conference

Shortly after we opened our new sanctuary in 2011 we started an annual, weekend Bible Conference. This Bible Conference has attracted some outsiders, but it is designed primarily to help our maturing members grow in Christ. The Lord has blessed us with a

wonderful array of speakers over the years, such as Sinclair Ferguson, Bryan Chapell, R. C. Sproul, and Ligon Duncan, and we have indeed seen growth in Christ.

New Tampa Christian Academy

God has blessed NTCA over the years. The School Board, Administrators, and teachers have been and are gifted and godly. NTCA started adding grades in 2009, after the completion of the education building. NTCA is a classical and covenantal Christian school for pre-kindergarten through eighth grade. By adding a grade a year, NTCA was able to manage both growth and the quality of education. NTCA, with its current number of 250 students (which is the maximum number of students we can accommodate), is the only Christian school that has children through the eighth grade in the New Tampa area. Happily, NTCA enjoys an outstanding reputation in our community. NTCA operates under the authority of the Session, and sees its primary focus as serving the members of TBPC.

Resource Center

The Resource Center contains books, tapes, CDs, DVDs, and even some old-fashioned videos! Many people in our church family regularly borrow one of the almost 12,000 items in our Resource Center.

Ministry/Service

The purpose of ministry has to do with service. The core is where the purpose of ministry takes place.

Pastor Martin Luther was added to the pastoral staff in 2014. A great leader himself, he has helped develop our maturing members into core leaders.

Class 301

We have developed a class that is very intentional in helping people find their place of service in our church. Members who complete this class discover their spiritual gifts, get involved in a ministry team, first as a participant, and perhaps later as a leader. Approximately 200 members have gone through Class 301.

Officer Training

Recognizing that a church is only as strong as its leadership, Elders and Deacons, as well as those in training, receive systematic and regular training throughout the year.

Leadership Team Meetings

Our Leadership Team meetings take place once a month. These two-hour training meetings are designed for all church officers, ministry leaders and core ministers (i.e., those who have completed Class 301 and are actively involved in a ministry). This is one of the most significant meetings in the church, because it affords the Senior Pastor the opportunity to cast and clarify TBPC's vision, and also to provide much-needed on-the-job training to those who serve in the core of the TBPC's ministry. The agenda for the Leadership Team meetings include an extended time of focused worship, recognition of all ministries, testimonies from the field, prayer, church news, ministry training, and a

“vision” message by the Senior Pastor on TBPC’s values, vision, and the character qualities and skills needed for ministry. A little over 100 core members regularly attend these meetings.

THE LIFE PHASES OF TBPC’S MINISTRY

There are 3 broad life phases of TBPC’s ministry: children, youth, and adults. Let’s see where we are now with each life phase of TBPC’s ministry.

Children’s Ministry

The Lord has blessed the Children’s Ministry of TBPC, primarily with gifted lay leadership. For many years the Children’s Ministry was led by an outstanding group of lay leaders. It was not until 2016 that we hired Pastor Samuel Wesley as the Pastor for Children’s Ministry. The Children’s Ministry had been so well developed that he simply stepped into a ministry that was already committed to our core purposes of evangelism, worship, fellowship, discipleship, and service.

Evangelism

The children of TBPC are involved in outreach, both locally and globally, though “Kids on a Mission.” Locally, they participate in ministry to children’s homes as well as the pregnancy care center, while also praying for and giving money to the missionaries that TBPC supports around the world. Some of the older children have even been through the Children’s Evangelism Explosion training.

Another outreach is the Christmas Walk-Thru. This event reaches hundreds of children and families each year in our community.

In 2008 we started a bus ministry to bring unchurched children (with their parents’ consent, of course) to a number of our ministries. In 2014 we added a second bus, and we hope to add a third bus this coming year.

We also have an exciting children’s outreach meeting on Saturday nights during the adult Outreach Meeting. In fact, one of the reasons people attend the Outreach Meeting is because there is an outstanding program for their children.

About 40 children participate in the “Dare to Declare” children’s choir. This choir participates in various outreach activities to the community.

In addition, the annual Vacation Bible School ministers to approximately 350 children each year.

Worship

Children through the end of 2nd grade participate in Children’s Church. A total of about 80 children participate in this ministry each week during the three worship services.

Fellowship

About 175 children participate in Pioneer Clubs on Wednesday evenings. We have an exciting puppet ministry, workshop ministry, as well as an enthusiastic music ministry on Wednesday evenings, as part of the Pioneer Clubs.

In addition, fellowship activities include special events such as drive-in movies (which are now shown on our permanent screen on the side of the Fellowship Hall), skating, bowling, blueberry picking, team sports activities, and so on.

Discipleship

About 250 children participate in the Sunday school ministry, which helps the parents in their discipleship training of their children.

Service

The service component for the Children's Ministry consists mainly of training for those involved in the ministry. Pastor Samuel Wesley uses this opportunity to equip all the Children's Ministry volunteers for their work with the children.

Youth Ministry

In 2004 TBPC hired Pastor George Whitefield who was responsible for Outreach and Youth. After 2 years both ministries had grown sufficiently so that we were able to hire a full-time Outreach Pastor and a full-time Youth Pastor. (Pastor George Whitefield took on the responsibilities for outreach and became the Pastor of Outreach.) Pastor Robert Murray McCheyne joined the pastoral staff in 2006, and he is still with us, carrying out a profoundly impacting ministry among our Youth.

The purpose statement of the Youth Ministry is "to CALL both Junior and Senior High students to WORSHIP God, SHARE his love with each other, help students GROW in their faith, and SERVE to the glory of God." Over the years the Youth Ministry has developed and implemented ministries to fulfill the purposes of evangelism, worship, fellowship, discipleship, and service.

Pastor McCheyne has an outstanding staff of parents, lay volunteers and summer interns who help with each of the two departments of Youth Ministry: Junior High Ministry and Senior High Ministry.

Evangelism

The Youth have developed an outreach ministry that has steadily drawn in a growing number of teenagers from the surrounding community. The Youth Ministry has a quarterly outreach concert sponsored by our own Youth Praise Band. In addition, for a number of years we have been able to bring in top-name Christian bands for concerts, because music is such a powerful attraction for teenagers.

Since we are in close proximity to a number of schools, we are a safe haven for some of the unchurched children. Our after school activities include a provision of tutorial help and a place where homework can be completed in peace and quiet.

After the completion of the Fellowship Hall/Gymnasium we were able to start a sports program that includes basketball and volleyball. The students who participate often comment on the Biblical values that they are seeing played out by the coaches and other team members. This has been a great encouragement to all the adults and parents who spend so much time with the students.

Worship

Youth Worship takes place on Sunday evenings. The Youth Praise Band provides the music for the service, and youth participate in various ways in the service. About 150 teenagers (and 35 adults) meet in the sanctuary for this service. After a time of singing and prayer Pastor McCheyne teaches the Senior High, while the Junior High are taught by one of our gifted adult volunteers.

Fellowship

Many of the fellowship activities take place in the form of the special events. Teenagers enjoy attending concerts at other venues, skating, bowling, movies, and so on. Scores of teenagers are involved in these activities on a regular basis.

Discipleship

Discipleship training takes place in two ways. First, the Sunday school ministry teaches a more general Bible study to all the teenagers who attend both the Junior High as well as the Senior High classes. Pastor McCheyne has outstanding teacher volunteers whom he coaches to teach the Bible in a manner that really helps the students grow.

The second way discipleship takes place is on Wednesday evenings through the in-depth Bible study for students who want to grow more in their faith. In addition, the discipleship process is enhanced through personal mentoring of the students.

Service

The core students are involved in leadership training with Pastor McCheyne. He helps them develop their spiritual gifts and abilities so that they serve the Lord in a number of ways in the church and in the community. For example, some of the Senior High students help out with teaching VBS, Sunday school, and the Saturday night outreach meeting to children.

Adult Ministry

The Adult Ministry has several departments: Singles, College and Career, Young Marrieds, Married with Children, Emptynesters, Seniors (also known as Pacesetters), Women's Ministry, and Men's Ministry.

Over the years, the purpose of the Women's Ministry (also known as Women in the Church, or WIC) has remained the same "that every woman know Christ personally and be committed to extending his kingdom in her life, home, church, community, and throughout the world."

The Men's Ministry has flourished as well, with various activities aimed at strengthening men in their relationships with God, their spouses, children, and one another.

God has blessed TBPC with wonderful and capable lay leaders in each of these ministry areas.

Furthermore, five full-time Pastors serve the Adult Ministry in each of the major purpose areas: Evangelism (Pastor George Whitefield), Worship (Pastor John Newton), Fellowship (Pastor Richard Baxter), Discipleship (Pastor John Calvin), and Service (Pastor Martin Luther). In addition, we have two Pastors for our Multicultural Ministries, one

for the Asian Ministry (Pastor Watchman Chang), and the other for the Hispanic Ministry (Pastor Jose Sanchez).

THE ADMINISTRATION OF TBPC'S MINISTRY

The administration of TBPC's ministry takes place in a number of ways, such as staffing, using the policy and ministry manual, and application of purposes.

Staffing of TBPC's Ministry

Properly serving a ministry the size of TBPC requires a number of pastoral staff members as well as administrative staff members.

Administrative staff members consist of office staff, custodians, nursery directors, and so on. Some are full-time, while a number are part-time.

Pastoral staff members consist of full-time Pastors of Evangelism, Worship, Fellowship, Discipleship, Service, Youth, Children, Chinese Ministry, and Hispanic Ministry. In addition, as the Senior Pastor, I oversee the day-to-day administration of the staff and ministries of TBPC. God has blessed us with a remarkable staff. We love being together, working together, praying together, and laughing together. I don't believe that there is a finer pastoral staff in the entire PCA!

Amazingly, the Lord has also provided an unpaid staff member, Jethro Midian, (who took an early retirement and wanted to be used by the Lord in kingdom ministry) to serve as the Administrative Director of Ministries.

Policy and Ministry Manual

For many years the Policy and Ministry Manual has guided the staff and ministries of TBPC. While the Session has the overall oversight of the staff and ministries of TBPC, the Policy and Ministry Manual was developed in order to facilitate and enhance ministry and to eliminate unnecessary micromanagement by the Session. It has worked very well, and the Session is in fact spending the bulk of its time praying, shepherding, leading, teaching, and discipling.

Application of Purposes

TBPC has rigorously integrated purposes into every area of ministry in the church. It has taken years for TBPC to become a purpose-driven church, and in many ways there is still a lot to do. Nevertheless, purposes have been applied to assimilation, programming, education, starting small groups (such as seeker groups, support groups, service groups, and growth groups), adding staff, structuring, preaching, budgeting, calendaring, and evaluating.

THE FACILITIES OF TBPC'S MINISTRY

The Lord has blessed TBPC with wonderful facilities. We have had 4 Capital Stewardship Campaigns during the past 15 years in order to raise the necessary funds. Thankfully, ministries have not suffered, and our focus has never been on building monuments to ourselves, but rather on building facilities to accommodate ministries.

Toward the end of 2004 we hired an architect who helped design a complete master plan for a fully developed site on the 5 acres of property we own on Bruce B. Downs Boulevard. At the same time we also hired a Capital Stewardship Company, so that we could begin the process of raising the needed funds for ministry expansion.

Education Complex

The education complex was the first building to be added, and it was completed in 2008. The classrooms at the northern end of the building were not added so that it could function as a temporary worship center until our new sanctuary was completed (in 2011). Then, the classrooms were added, and we now have 30 large classrooms. These classrooms are used for committee and small group meetings outside of school hours.

During the week the education complex accommodates our classical Christian school, the New Tampa Christian Academy, which is for pre-kindergarten through eighth grade children. (We currently have maximum enrollment of 250 students.)

In addition, we also have 4 oversized classrooms that seat approximately 80 persons each. These rooms are used for conferences, seminars, various Bible studies, and so on.

All of the classrooms are fully equipped with first-rate technology, such as HD monitors, screens, videos, DVDs, voice over PowerPoint, communication, etc.

The education complex also houses a bookstore. The bookstore is open to the public since there is no other Christian bookstore in New Tampa. The bookstore is quite popular, with the community as well as with our own members, not only because it has a fine selection of Christian books for sale, but perhaps also because of its Starbucks-like coffee shop! Many people find it a great place to meet and chat over a cup of coffee. It is also a good place for moms to meet while waiting for their children at the end of the school day, or while their children are playing on the playground, which is just outside the bookstore and visible to their watchful eyes.

Sanctuary

After several years of worshipping in the northern section of the education complex, the sanctuary was built and completed in 2011. The Lord blessed us with a sanctuary that has first-class technology for sound, lighting, video, audio, communication, etc. The beautiful, simple, yet elegant sanctuary seats just over 600 persons. The narthex is very large, and can accommodate overflow crowds, in addition to being used for large group meetings, receptions, classes, seminars, etc. Our various musicians, throughout the week, including Sundays, frequently use the music room at the back of the sanctuary.

Office Complex

The office complex was built and completed at the same time as the sanctuary, and so it was also completed in 2011. The office complex comfortably houses our pastoral and administrative staff. There is also a conference room, which serves as a staff and lunchroom during the week.

Paper and electronic message boards are strategically located throughout each of the various buildings in highly visible locations. They are designed to communicate important information to those who enter our facilities.

Fellowship Hall/Gymnasium

The final building to be added was our fellowship hall/gymnasium, which was completed in 2014. TBPC has a wonderful multi-purpose fellowship hall/gymnasium! The gymnasium is large enough for basketball and other indoor activities that are used by the school, as well as the children and youth. The large commercial kitchen, just off the fellowship hall/gymnasium is used throughout the week to prepare meals for the school children, the Family Night Dinners on Wednesdays, as well as for other social events in the church and school. The roomy restrooms attached to the fellowship hall/gymnasium have showers and dressing areas for freshening up after exercise.

CONCLUSION

I could go on and on about what God has done at the Tampa Bay Presbyterian Church these past 18 years, but you have a good picture of what God has done in our midst. About 16 years ago we stopped and asked God for *TBPC's 2020 Vision*. We listened, and we responded in obedience. And now we can thank God for all that he has done in our midst.

We serve a great God. We have accomplished all of this because we listened to God, and we obeyed him. He deserves all the honor and glory.

Furthermore, there is simply no way we could have accomplished any of this in our power and strength. It has been accomplished because of our great and mighty God—to God be all the glory!

Have there been difficult days? Sure there have. Have there been discouraging days? Yes. Have there been days when we experienced the attacks of the Enemy? Absolutely. But not once have we doubted that our sovereign God wants to bring honor and glory to himself, and that he is pleased to use weak, yet obedient, vessels such as ourselves.

Friends, let us remind ourselves that our work is not done! God is still glorifying himself by bringing home his family. We are simply on a journey, and we have completed a number of steps on that journey.

But the journey continues. We need to stop and ask God again, “Lord, what do you want us to do next?” Amen.

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