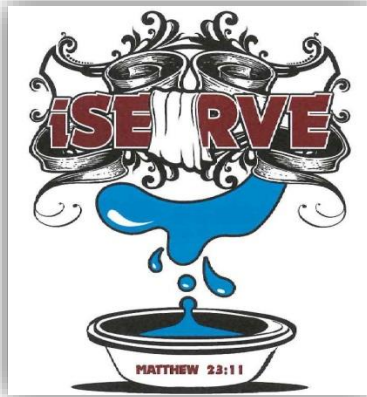


Ebenezer United Church of Christ Inc.
VISION STATEMENT 2017

“Beyond All Limits; Serving Christ With Radical Commitment”

(Matthew 23:11)

by Rev. Dr. Larry E. Covington, Senior Pastor/Teacher



After introducing, adopting and applying the theme: “Moving to the Core and Getting the Core Moving – Maturing Believers into Discipleship” emphasizing progressively moving us as a congregation to consider what the essentials are in serving Christ to produce effective ministry, we now move to examine this year’s theme: “Beyond all Limits; Serving Christ with Radical Commitment.”

Looking back over last year, I am happy to share based on my observations that we have moved or matured in some measured way from the stupor of stagnation and complacency to ministry engagement. I have seen more interest in ministry and more people get engaged in serving. We will perpetually compete sad to say with the demands of culture, the consumerism context of the culture as well as the secularization of the culture with its values, vices and violence – but I tend to view these not as obstacles but as opportunities.

We continued embracing our new church wide theme: “We are a Great Church, Because We Serve” and the iServe campaign is now the culture of our church. It has really taken hold of all that we are and I look forward to us expanding on it until it becomes the natural way we do the King’s business. In other words, we are on our way to be known as a serving congregation that exalts Christ beyond the doors of the church. Now let’s embark on GOING BEYOND ALL LIMITS! Let’s get radical in our commitment of serving Christ, the Church, the Community, and the Culture.

The 2016 year saw us add 50 new members to our ranks and we recorded the highest number of first time decisions for salvation in my tenure as Pastor! Though the total number was on the low

end, the number of adults and youth that accepted Christ as Savior was 19! To God be the glory for the great things He has done!

During the 2016 year, I also sensed a more engaged people around the Word as we shared messages on our theme, especially around the theme of moving to the core of the priority of membership (one anothering) and to our practice as well as to our pedigree (familiar relationships). God also blessed us in our Bible Study, expositionally walking through the Thessalonian Epistles.

2016 saw us fully structure our Youth Ministry under the leadership of Pastor Reaves. We also restructured and streamlined our staff so that we can be better stewards of the Lord's resources without cutting back on ministry. God blessed Brother Deron Keys to transition off staff as our Minister of Worship and Arts and He sent us Brother Anthony McDonald to not only carry on but to, with God's guidance, move us up to a higher level of excellence.

2016 also afforded us the blessing of starting a brand new 501c3 non-profit agency: The Excel Community Association of Alamance Inc. which applied for the 21st Century Learning Grant that potentially will house a free afterschool program for the 2017-2018 school year. This non-profit will sponsor and oversee community initiatives in affordable housing, education, rehabilitation and community health enrichment.

As we enter a brand new year, embracing our theme, I am leading us to review our ministry infrastructure, ministry by ministry. This will be a slow and laborious process but by investing the time, energy and effort into this project, I believe this will be profitable so that we can strengthen what remains and maximize our ministry.

I am submitting the following visionary projects:

- I. Ministry Infrastructure Review:
A detailed audit of each ministry of the church looking at leadership, vision, expectations, goals, objectives, and ministry outcomes. To be completed by July 2017.
- II. Re-launch the Ebenezer Center for the Performing Arts by April 2017:
The Ebenezer Center for the Performing Arts will host our performing and theatrical arts program that will offer educational training in voice, piano, organ, drum (percussion), and other instruments. It will also host plays and other types of performing arts and entertainment including concerts. Director: Ms. Camille Jones.
- III. Impact Conference on Preaching and Leadership (Harvest Conference):
The inaugural Impact Conference (formerly the Harvest Conference) will take place March 23-25, 2017. This Conference will be a national targeted conference featuring national and international conference guests and pastors. The goal is to train leaders and pastor/preachers in the local church. The Conference will be a stand alone line item and

will support itself. The Conference will offer CEU's to seminaries and accredited Bible Colleges. The Conference will jointly be co-sponsored by the First Baptist Church of Apple Street.

IV. iLife BABEZ Place:

Our Nursery Ministry will re-launch in February 2017 with the goal of serving both congregations by September 2017. The new nursery will be located in the ECCO building. The old nursery will become a Cry-Room for parents with small children or with children that need special attention where they can also view the service.

V. 90 Day Blitz Campaign x 2:

This year we will launch two short term, accelerated stewardship campaigns to pay for the pulpit and audio project (renovations).

Phase I – Audio and Visual Media, purchasing monitors, cameras and appropriate equipment to enhance worship. **Total Cost:** \$40,000.

Plan A -Seek out 400 members; 100 to give \$200; 100 to give \$100; and 200 to give \$50

B – The campaign will start February 1 and conclude on April 30 with a celebration in our Super Service.

Phase II: Pulpit Renovation - This project will include moving the choir stand to the center of the church, rearranging the instruments and restructuring the pulpit area. Electrical work will be a part of this project as well as appropriate decorations.

Plan A – Seek 400 members to give in the following ways and amounts: 100 to give \$200; 100 to give \$100; 200 to give \$50.

Goal: \$40,000

B – The mini campaign will begin on September 2 and will conclude on November 26 with a special celebration on that date.

VI. Race to the Bottom Line Campaign:

We will pause our over and above general mortgage reduction campaign while the two above mini campaigns are on but please know that if a member wants to keep up their monthly or weekly vow it will be appreciated.

We raised over \$28,000 in 2016 towards our mortgage reduction and we praise the Lord for generous givers! To God be the Glory!

VII. Sunday Morning Electives:

Starting in March we will re-launch our traditional Sunday School classes under a new name and a new logo-iLearn Uni-versity (united in Diversity) with a combination of

traditional classes and new family oriented biblical studies classes. Learners will earn certificates after completing semesters with a graduation celebration held in December 2017.

VIII. New Member Goal for 2017:

The goal this year is for 50 additions to our membership. We will embark on two soul-winning institutes and two Frangelism days this year with the goal of reaching out to our community and evangelizing. Date to be announced...

IX. Thematic Expositional/Series Preaching:

We will generally stay within the framework of our thematic thrust “Beyond All Limits; Serving Christ with Radical Commitment” as our planned preaching for the year.

X. Excel Community Association of Alamance Inc./Champions Academy:

Will launch in February 2017.

In closing, let me say that I look forward to a prosperous year of ministry and mission. I am also thankful for the faithful ministry of Pastor David Reaves. He provided excellent ministry to this congregation and he will be missed. However, I am excited for his new charge and this new season in his life. I praise God for his wife and three children and let us continue to pray for them as they embrace their new venture at Sweet Gum Grove Missionary Baptist Church. It is with great faith and expectation that I write this bold vision.