



The Process

The strategic planning process, entitled **FBC Ignite**, began in May 2023 with the active deacon body approving an eight-person committee, within church membership. This committee was asked to guide First Baptist Church Carrollton through a process of, prayerfully and thoughtfully, answering the question – *What does God desire for the future of our church?*

The committee appointed to lead in the addressing of this powerful question included: Mark Albertus, David Brooks (co-chair), Brian Dill, Melina Douthit, Nichole Fannin, David Hughes (co-chair, Pastor) Jim Prather, and Suzane Wynn (ex-officio Deacon). Assisting through consultation was Dr. Matt Cook, with Center for Healthy Churches.

Following a series of training and planning meetings with the appointed committee. The congregation engaged in an intentional and prayer-filled discovery period.

- ❖ November 11, 2023, Congregational Conversation I: Understanding the community surrounding First Baptist Church and confirming our values as a congregation.
- ❖ November 12, 2023, Church-wide Survey: Launch of church wide survey to collect and confirm values and opportunities for God to use and activate First Baptist Church from the hearts and perspectives of our congregation.
- ❖ January 21, 2024, Review of Values Statements: Open dialogue with adult and youth Sunday School classes to discuss the values statements that were identified through the congregational conversation and survey.
- ❖ February 4, 2024, Congregational Conversation II: Visioning the future for First Baptist Church using the identified value statements as a guide in a church-wide dreaming exercise.

The incredible engagement and response from the congregation of First Baptist Church through this process has directed our planning to three key areas for focus: **Worship**, **Youth and Children**, and **Thriving Community**.

The Plan: Intention and Focus

Worship

Worship is a time where people can be inspired and experience the heart of First Baptist Church. Our rich history of traditional worship continues to evolve inviting our community to enter our sanctuary, and through their worship experience come to know that Jesus Christ is Lord.

First Baptist seeks to provide a worship experience that is reverent, relevant, and joyful, creating a welcoming and sought after environment for both current and future members.

- An experience that begins in the parking lot with warm hospitality and continues into the sanctuary or space for worship service.
- The featuring of a musical blend that mixes both traditional and contemporary worship songs and sounds in weekly worship services.
- Christ and Biblically centered teaching that connects with the heart and provides meaningful, spiritual direction to all- no matter their age/generation.

Youth and Children

The engagement and energy of youth and children at First Baptist Church Carrollton are key indicators of the current and future relevance of our church. When the youth and children, along with their families are connected and thriving- so are we.

First Baptist Church seeks a vibrant youth and children ministry that is inviting and meaningful to youth, children, and their families. Facilitated by passionate and prepared ministers, as well as a committed network of congregational volunteers, we will invest in our youth and children by offering engaging and innovative programming that enhances biblical understanding and nurtures the joy and fellowship that is a critical part of youth, children, and family ministry.

- Experiences that activate our youth and children in missions, ministry, and community building.
- Programming that offers support and education for families as they help their youth and children navigate life and grow in faith.
- An environment that encourages and empowers youth and children in their faith formation through intentional opportunities to create connection, form community, experience worship, and engage in service.

Thriving Community

Our church's community is founded upon consistent engagement and shared experiences that foster spiritual growth through Bible study, fellowship, and service to others. In as much as people connect through the various engagement and educational opportunities, it is the hope of First Baptist Church Carrollton, that everyone is given the chance to experience a strong sense of belonging within our church community.

First Baptist Church seeks to provide vibrant opportunities that foster a thriving community inside and outside of the church through Bible study, worship, mission, service, fellowship, fun, and in simply doing life together. These times of community connection occur at traditional and nontraditional times, at varied locations to enhance accessibility and visibility, and cultivate a feeling of belonging that will inspire participation among our church members and the community at large.

- Small groups ministries led by dedicated leaders with ministerial support which reflect various interests of our congregation and community- sharing similar life experiences, discipleship desires, and social needs.
- A consistent opportunity for both mission and service in the community of Carrollton and within the global community, intentionally designed to bring people together for the sharing of God's love.
- Specially focused concerts, retreats, and events for church and community members alike, extending invitation to all to join First Baptist Church as we learn, serve, share, and do life together.

Next Steps: Plan Activation

The above outlined strategic plan is bold and will be sure to make an impact at First Baptist Church Carrollton, the community, and our world. Now the focus shifts to the important work of taking the plan and creating action.

This strategic plan will now move to the leadership of three, yet to be named implementation teams for activation - one implementation team per focus area led by our ministerial team. The implementation process, like that of the discovery and planning process, will be prayerful, purposeful, and require the support and participation of the congregation.

Initiatives will be launched carefully, with necessary learning and preparation. The full implementation will be a process of years, not months - focusing on the outcomes for the calling, life, and ministry of First Baptist Church Carrollton. Our church will experience progress slowly but surely.

In time, we will watch as our church continues to become the fulfillment of God's calling, expressed through the creation of this strategic plan. Countless lives will be changed- our current church members and others who are not here now- but soon will be!