

## VISION TEAM MEETING SUMMARY

Dr. Nancy Burgin Rankin

August 15, 2019

Central UMC, Shelby

We had a great start with our new coach Nancy Rankin on Aug. 15. Building upon the work of our Church Council in 2015, continuing under the coaching of Kim Shockley (2018-2019), Nancy helped us clarify our next step: to dig deeper into parts of our “playbook” and flesh out what ministries would look like.

During our introductions, each person was asked what they love about Central and what they want more of at Central.

LOVE: People/serving, people/music/feeding, friendly people, SS class, children, working with volunteers, people/Wesley theology, people/music, the diversity here.

WANT MORE OF: Unity around our goals, connecting people we help with Christ, active members, engage people with us, excitement/involvement, young families with babies, engage with community, clarity in direction, relate to each other, help young people be a part of things, church is more than what happens here... take the church “out there.”

Some of the points and topics mentioned in discussion include:

- Intentional Care and Intentional Discipling
- Discipleship and spiritual development are important for the future.
- Kids need role models other than staff. Need adult role models, small groups for youth
- Take note of Acts 6 – Model for the early church
- Important key – Discover spiritual gifts
- Empower and equip laity
- Strategic planning involves answering this question: What does the Lord require?
- Quote related to “dead” churches: “If this horse is dead, isn’t it time to dismount?”
- Keep asking: Are we doing what God has called us to be?
- The goal is to choose the faithful path.
- These are just a few of the points made. Those attending could certainly add to this list.

### Shifts for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

As we learned during the Shift sermon series in the Fall of 2017, Phil Maynard described these shifts that would need to take place if congregations are to be effective/faithful in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

- From Fellowship to Hospitality
- From Worship as an Event to Worship as a Lifestyle
- From Membership to Discipleship
- From “Serve Us” to Service
- From “Survival Mentality” to Generosity

Nancy offered these shifts to consider as well.

## 21st Century Paradigm Shifts For Effective Christian Ministry

- **Family/Small Membership** to **Lg. Membership/Small Groups**
- **Programs/Large Events** to **Dev. Personal Relationships**
- **Clergy Centered Leadership** to **Partnership: Clergy-Laity**
- **Clergy as Chaplain** to **Lay Pastoral Care Providers**
- **Clergy as Managers** to **Clergy as Visionary Leaders**
- **Staff who do Programs** to **Staff who Train Lay Leaders**
- **Low Expectations** to **Churches of High Commitment**
- **Committee Members** to **Committed Servants**
- **Status Quo** to **Strategic Planning**
- **One Worship Service** to **Multiple Services/Creative**
- **Quantity-Mediocrity** to **Excellence/Niche Ministries**
- **Mono-Sensory Worship** to **Multi-Sensory-Media Worship**
- **One-Day-Week Church** to **Seven-Day-Week Church**



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### Car Illustration

Picture a car with four “people” in it, two in the front (Vision and Relationships) and two in the back (Programs and Management).

**Scenario A:** Vision is in the driver’s seat. It is vision that drives or directs Relationships, Programs and Management.

**Scenario B:** Relationships is in the driver’s seat with Vision moving to the passenger side. Programs and Management are in the back. When relationships drive the vehicle, keeping everyone happy in a good relationship is primary. Vision is secondary. Vision, Programs and Management follow the lead of Relationships.

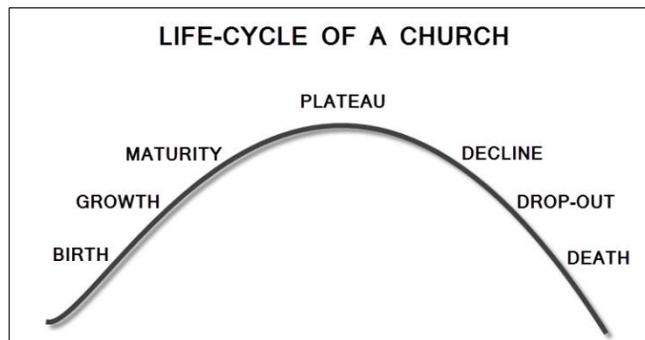
**Scenario C:** Programs is in the driver’s seat. Everything revolves around programs. Making sure we have the best programs and many programs. Again, Vision gets lost.

**Scenario D:** Management is in the driver’s seat. Administration is priority. The purpose of the church becomes striving for a well-oiled machine as an organization.

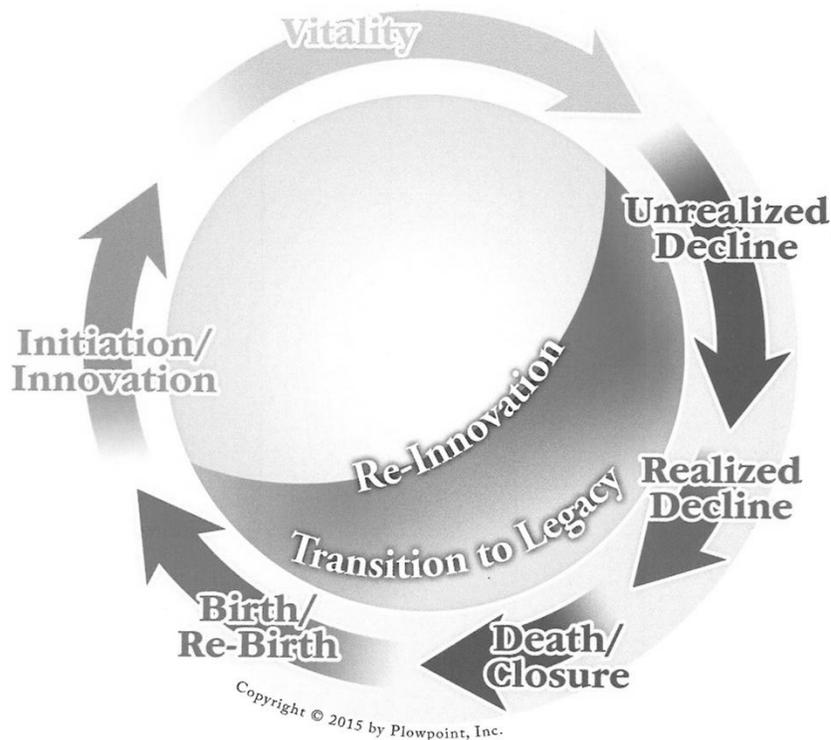
Nancy pointed out that if a church is going to be vital and grow, Vision must always be in the driver’s seat directing and leading the other three. Therefore, it is important to have a clear vision for the congregation to understand.

### Life Cycle of a Church/Congregation

Typically, a diagram of the life-cycle of a church is represented by a Bell Curve. Below is an example.



Nancy introduced us to an alternative representation that offers an opportunity for congregations to shift back to a growing mode in a time of decline. (See diagram on next page) It includes these stages: Birth/Rebirth, Initiation/Innovation, Vitality, Unrealized Decline, Realized Decline, Death/Closure. If the circle is a clockface, at about the 2 o’clock position, the congregation is in a stage of decline, but is in denial or is not aware of it. This moves into a phase of realized decline that is quite evident. As you can tell in the diagram, during these phases, there is an opportunity to transition through re-innovation back to the Initiation/Innovation stage. A clear vision is essential for this transition. If a congregation does nothing, it eventually transitions to Legacy, that involves celebrating the life of this church and then closing it.



Where is our church in this cycle? Are we before, at, or after the point when we have a chance to move back over and grow into a vital congregation? We have an opportunity to remission or rediscover the mission and transition to a stage leading to vitality and a church in its prime.

#### A Little Homework!

In preparation for our next meeting, Nancy asked us to dig deeper in fleshing out our strategic anchors. For instance, for the first one let us envision what exactly would it look like if we are successful in building relationships with people we don't know well. What does it mean to share life with them? Who are the people that we don't know well? Are they church members or persons in our community? What do you see us doing to fulfill this anchor?

Six Strategic Anchors:

1. Experiencing Community will be successful when we build relationships (share life) with people we don't know well.
2. Experiencing Personal Transformation will be successful when people take responsibility for their own spiritual growth.
3. Experiencing Social Transformation will be successful when we see our work through love and grace result in positive change in our homes, our workplaces, our community and our world.
4. Experiencing Purpose Finding will be successful when we discover, claim, and practice our spiritual gifts, talents, and abilities.

5. Experiencing Creativity will be successful when we discover, claim, and practice our spiritual gifts, talents, and abilities.
6. Experiencing Accountability will be successful when we are encouraged to embrace the wholeness of who God calls us to be.