



## Summary and Invitations from Visioning Retreat #2

We give thanks for God's faithfulness to us...through the years, and even through blizzard conditions like we experienced this past weekend! Thank you to each of you for your continued prayers as we discern what God is calling us to next. We are grateful.

Last month, we asked you to share your meaningful memories, unsung heroes, and the themes that tell the story of who we are as a community of faith...and you responded! Thank you. God is good and has, indeed, been with us.

A task force then gathered your stories and thematically grouped them—out of a belief that these stories tell us something about Colonial's core values. The aim here was to begin to uncover and articulate our community's **True North**: our core values, focus, and strategic priorities to which God is calling us to next.

During the next week you will be asked to review these themes and to let us know if you see anything that is missing or anything that stands out to you (conversations will be held on 4/18 at 6:30pm and 4/22 at 10:45am). Then, our big ask will be that you would lend your voice to visioning forward by answering the questions listed at the bottom of the next page (conversations will be held on 5/2 at 6:30pm and 5/6 at 10:45am). *Please note, you will be able to find all background materials on the website under ReForming.*

### Part I: Re-Grounding

- Once we made it through the snow and out to the Arboretum, we gathered together to paint our prayers and hopes for the community.
- We opened with our TAG consultant, Kevin Graham Ford, asking us how we felt about Vision Retreat #1. Team members shared sentiments of feeling a sense of promise, hope, and that this process is a sacred time.
- Kevin re-centered us in our work to help Colonial align with its TRUE NORTH, through determining our community's **core values, focus, and strategic priorities**.

### Part II: Clarifying Core Values

- Next, we began a dialogue about Colonial's core values as a community of faith. This conversation was rooted in the themes that emerged from the collective community's sharing of favorite memories, unsung heroes, and themes that arise from these stories.
- In small groups we discussed language for how to speak of these values and came back together to discover the resonance between our respective conversations

### Part III: Leadership Learnings

- Over lunch we began to reflect upon what we learned from the process of gathering with and listening to community stories—asking what it highlighted about what needs to change in our leadership functioning.
- We re-convened on Sunday and spent more time talking about leadership functioning and what needs to change. Many different perspectives were voiced. This was important as we seek to move forward, for our differences contribute the power of what our community can do together.

- This included conversations about the different ways that our generations need/desire to experience community and what it means to be Christians today in view of changes in technology, demographics, and socio-cultural challenges that families face.
- We named the gap in our 40-50 age demographic and the challenges of what this means for the next generation of leaders.
- We talked about ways in which our past impacts how we experience/interpret the community today

#### Part IV: Envisioning Colonial's Future

- The afternoon was then devoted to talking about mission and strategy.
- Kevin differentiated between mission-based vs. interest-based organizations. A mission-based group (like a church) should always have a mission that is comprised of purpose + result/benefit + beneficiary. A mission statement defines both what we do *and don't* do; it helps us to say both YES and NO.
  - Kevin pointed out that churches are the only enterprises where the members aren't the beneficiaries...for churches exist not just for ourselves, but to make disciples.
- Strategy arises from mission and is defined as "an integrated focusing of resources to fulfill our mission in an ever-changing context."
- So if our aim is to have a mission statement and strategic focus that is in alignment with our core values, we need to do more to understand our context. To this end, we examined the era and time in which we live (e.g.- we talked about the influence of being in a digital age).
- We looked at six areas that can be potential disruptors/change drivers arising in our context over the coming years. These include: demographics, economics, membership, competitors (other organizations), technologies, and complementators (other non-profits with whom we partner).
- In view of these change drivers, we ended our time by **futuring**, asking the same questions that we are posing to you below; wondering how we should think of doing ministry in view of anticipated changes in years to come...for our work in ReForming is not to create a church for yesterday or today, but a church for the coming 5, 10, 20 years.
- We closed with reflection and prayer.

#### Envisioning Our Future:

#### Thinking about the ministry of Colonial Church

Please talk about these questions in your small group, ministry, and with friends at Colonial. Record your responses (and/or those of your group) or send them via email to [swilhelmgarbers@colonialchurch.org](mailto:swilhelmgarbers@colonialchurch.org). Please reply by **May 11<sup>th</sup>**.

- What do you hope will be most different about Colonial in 10 years?
- What would you want Colonial to most be known for in our community?
- What is the biggest gap between our stated values and the reality?