



**TAB**

**V I S I O N  
R E N E W A L**

2016 Report



## OUR MISSION

**Tabernacle Presbyterian Church is called by God, led by faith in Jesus Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit to demonstrate the Kingdom of God through worship, discipleship and outreach.**

**Honoring our heritage at 34th and Central, we will faithfully serve our community, city and world in the present and prepare expectantly for the future.**

# Contents

3 Letter From Session

5 Vision Renewal Report

14 Addendum

17 Session's Charge

# Tab's Jubilee Year of Vision Renewal

## *A letter from Session*

From the Session of Tabernacle Presbyterian Church (commonly known as “Tab”), greetings in Christ Jesus to ...

- ... members and friends of Tab, Pastors John Gable and Oscar Clavel and our colleagues who devote themselves to inspiring, encouraging, caring for and leading us in our life and ministry here at 34th and Central;
- ... neighbors and community partners;
- ... those who have been sent into the world to witness in Word and service to the saving love of our Lord and Savior; and
- ... all who hear of us throughout the metropolitan area.

Grace, peace and love to each of you in keeping with the promise that is in Jesus Christ, light of the world. We thank God for each of you. Acknowledging that the source of our time, talents and resources is the God of creation, we embrace in gratitude the opportunity to seek and respond to God's transforming call to demonstrate the Kingdom of God. What we declare here in writing we seek to live out with you in person, as friend and humble seeker after God's own heart.

In 2015, the Session established a Vision Renewal Team and commissioned it to revisit Tab's vision, core values, mission and purpose with a dual objective: to assess our alignment with the greatest commandments spoken by Jesus (You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind, and in the same manner, love your neighbor as yourself (Matthew 22: 37-40)), and to discern the priorities that will guide future decisions about the allocation of our energies, abilities, time and financial resources.

Infused with God's Word and Spirit through study, meditation and prayer, and inspired by the Great Commission to “go and make disciples of all nations,” the Vision Renewal Team pursued its work first by seeking input and insights from members of the congregation, Tab's pastors and staff, leaders from community churches, neighbors, community partners, and books and articles. Then, the Team members engaged in individual consideration, focused discussion and collaborative analysis of what they had heard, read and discerned. Key to this process was the document that has come to be known simply as the “1966 Report,” a statement that has served from its inception as the inspiration for Tab's decision to remain rooted in our neighborhood and as Tab's statement of alignment with God's desire for reconciliation and justice.

From this process, the Team gathered commonly shared messages of hope and challenge and shaped them into the Report that follows, which has been reviewed and gratefully accepted by Tab's Session. It is this Session's hope that the Vision Renewal Team's Report will help to lead this congregation into a renewed sense of God's call, individually and as a body of Christ rooted in this particular place, at this particular time for particular purposes.

The Vision Renewal Team's Report is built on these three key visions:

### **GREATER FAITH**

Tab will be a place where people are challenged to grow stronger in faith, to become equipped to serve, and to pursue opportunities for innovative and collaborative service.

### **DEEPER RELATIONSHIPS**

Tab will be a catalyst for deeper, loving relationships that embrace differences for the sake of fellowship and service.



## A STRONGER COMMUNITY

Tab will work in partnership with its neighbors to strengthen the Mapleton-Fall Creek community, advocate for justice and promote God's shalom for all people.

With this Report in hand, we look forward to the next phase of this process: developing a plan for implementation, which will guide in taking this vision and turning it into tangible, practical action. It will be an exciting process that promises to open up new doors for our congregation and, as the Vision Renewal Team said in its Report, launch a new era of impact for Tab.

As we launch the next phase of the process just as the 1966 Report reaches its 50th year, we wish to make the most of this occasion by echoing a practice from ancient Israel: The Year of Jubilee.

Each year, the Hebrew people were called to atone for their communal sins on the Day of Atonement, which, as faithfully performed, resulted in God's forgiveness. Once every 50 years, this ritual of atonement took on even greater significance, as the people of God were called to celebrate a Year of Jubilee to "proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants." During this Jubilee year, the people of Israel were to dedicate themselves to economic justice and solemn reflection on God's provision. Land was to be returned to those from whom it had been taken for unpaid debts, those in bondage were to be released, families were to be reunited, and all were to keep the year holy as the Sabbath.

It is to this Jubilee that Jesus referred when He read from the scroll of Isaiah in the synagogue of His home town of Nazareth: "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because He has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor, He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor" (Luke 4:18 and 19, quoting Christ reading from Isaiah 61:1-2).

And so on this, the fiftieth anniversary of Tab's 1966 Report, we celebrate our year of Jubilee, our year of seeking liberty, and our acceptance of God's offer of freedom from sin and entry into new life. We set apart this year for seeking renewed restoration in right relationships and justice in our community. We declare the year of the Lord's favor as we keep to the path laid before us.

Accordingly, the Session resolves to seek the Lord's favor in this Tab Jubilee Year of Vision Renewal by advancing the following action steps:

- To call for corporate prayer and meditation on Scripture for continued discernment;
- To promote the collaboration of Session, Deacons, Pastors and Staff to discuss and identify the next steps leading from the Vision Report;
- To employ our vast creative resources to develop means by which we will communicate to the world effectively and memorably our renewal vision, core values and Jubilee joy;
- To encourage Tab's community of members, friends, visitors, neighbors and partners to participate in task groups formed to discuss and implement vision goals; and
- To explore the realignment of stewardship and budget goals in order to live into our vision.

Our prayer is that this Report will serve as the renewed call of God on our lives, individually and together in fellowship, and that it will spark a re-dedication to our expression of love in worship and discipleship and stir a reinvigorated seeking of God's will. To this end, we set apart 2016 as Tab's Jubilee Year of Vision Renewal, praying for Tab's future, giving thanks to our Creator God for his enduring love and mercy, and seeking the joy of God's presence in our coming in and going out.

# 2016 Vision Renewal Report

## To The Session Of Tabernacle Presbyterian Church

“You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence.” (PSALM 16:11)

The members of the Vision Renewal Team submit this Vision Renewal Report to the Session, not as our vision, but as God’s leading revealed through prayer, study and conversation. We pray that Tab’s course is always first and foremost fixed on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith (Hebrews 12:2).

We give thanks that in 2016 Tab is healthy as measured by quality of staff leadership, number of attendees and financial solvency. However, we also recognize that there is no “good enough” in the work for God’s Kingdom, and acknowledge a collective sense of expectation that the Holy Spirit is leading Tab to a new era of impact.

*“From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded and from the one who has been entrusted with much, more more will be asked.” Luke 12:48*

It is in this spirit of strength and expectation that Tab’s Session created and commissioned the Vision Renewal Team and charged it to gather and focus the collective voice of the congregation in pursuit of a renewed sense of God’s call on our lives, individually and as a strong and healthy congregation committed to God. This Report is the product of that Team’s work, intended as a tool for identifying current and future priorities and a guide for decisions of stewardship and resource allocation.

### A DESIRE FOR RECONCILIATION

Tab is a congregation focused on reconciliation, or right relationship, with God and with each other. Through His life, Christ demonstrated the love we are to show the world. Through His death on the cross, He made it possible for us to have the right relationships we seek. Through His resurrection, He removed the barriers that block those relationships. In short, as described in Ephesians 2, Jesus died so that we could have peace with God and with each other.

We recognize this reconciliation is not an event, but rather an ongoing process calling us to deeper spirituality, deeper commitments to each other and more purposeful ministry with the people around us. We also recognize the world resists this reconciliation through a culture that grows increasingly polarized and isolating; through enduring needs too often met with short-term fixes; and through tangible poverties that block the path to spiritual riches.

To address these challenges, Tab seeks to provide a path toward deeper personal Christian faith and a means for serving the greater community in ways that unite rather than divide. We seek to provide immediate help as well as a way for people to build lives of dignity. We seek to address urgent needs while still emphasizing God’s message in a way that changes lives forever.

Tab brings to this task a strong foundation and storied history. God’s Word is the lamp unto our feet, and we continually seek guidance in prayer and through the Holy Spirit. A vibrant people grounded in a Reformed tradition preserved through our Presbyterian heritage, we are committed to sharing the Good News and serving God’s flock. We have demonstrated this commitment at 34th and Central for nearly a century, with programs and services focused on meeting the needs of the people who live in this neighborhood. Many amazing ministries have blossomed from the entrepreneurial pursuits of our members, neighbors and community partners, and much fruit has been harvested from those ministries.

Our challenge now is to resist complacency, to avoid a sense that all is well and we no longer need to strive. We know we are called periodically to “test and approve what God’s will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will” (Romans 12:1–2). We know we must work to ensure that it is God’s will we follow, not the will of the world around us. To that end, we know we must constantly review and renew ourselves, challenging ourselves to seek God’s next call, pushing ourselves to a greater level of faith, and desiring true reconciliation with God and each other.

In this work for reconciliation, the Vision Renewal Team trusts the congregation will focus its endeavors in ways that align with the talents of its members, maximize the use of our generous-though-not-unlimited resources, and generate long-term impact. What we seek is not discipleship that is a mile wide and an inch thick; rather, we are sent out to connect in focused ministry that delves deeply into need and opportunity.

**As much as we see this as a statement of vision, we see it as a challenge to the people of Tab:**

- a challenge to accept that the legacy we have built is a foundation on which to build again, not a place to rest
- a challenge to push into new territories, not simply defend what we have
- a challenge to never grow complacent in our work, faith, or love of one another, but, rather, to strive always to go further and deeper

In short, we see it as a challenge to grow beyond what we are and to become something greater for the Kingdom of God.

This challenge comes in large part from the inspiration the Vision Renewal Team drew from its work. The Team sensed a new optimism for Tab’s future, not only from the congregation but also in the community. It heard a fresh appreciation for Tab’s presence as a community of worshippers and a place for service. It recognized a revitalized energy around the notion that God is leading Tab into deeper incarnational ministry and that by the Holy Spirit, Tab is becoming more emboldened to make a difference for God in the quality of life in our church and in our neighborhood.

This energy buoyed the Team in its work, and led it to see the vision statements that resulted from this process as invitations to Tab’s community to join in exciting work that will please God and lift up His people. It stirred a sense of joy over what is possible. It is our hope this document will not just inform but inspire a new era of impact.

It is in this context and with sincere humility that the Vision Renewal Team offers a “vision” of God’s direction for Tab, assured that, by God’s guidance, we will experience His joy.

## **A PROCESS FOR VISION RENEWAL**

In 2015, Tab’s Session issued the following proclamation to the congregation:

*The Session of Tabernacle Presbyterian Church commissions the Vision Renewal Team to engage the congregation in responding to God’s reaffirming and transforming call to demonstrate the Kingdom of God in this place at this time.*

*“Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and His understanding no one can fathom. He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary; and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.” Isa 40:28–31*

Charging its Vision Renewal Team to seek first God’s guidance and then input from the congregation and community, the Session asked the Team to return to it a report that would “identify current and future priorities to help guide stewardship decisions regarding operations and strategic allocations of resources.”

Prayer launched and sustained the Team’s work. Working together and individually, Team members read relevant books and articles, engaged in discussions and held focused conversations with the congregation, Tab’s pastors and staff, leaders from community churches, neighbors and community partners. Team members drew inspiration from the formative “1966 Report” which defined Tab’s decision to remain at 34th and Central. They sought the insights of other churches and organizations and considered Tab’s history and geography. And they asked two question repeatedly: “What are Tab’s greatest opportunities for impact in the future?” and “Where do you see God leading the people of Tab?” The Team was moved often by the passion with which the congregation and community spoke of Tab and inspired by a palpable sense of expectation.

*“Our place (at 34th and Central) is a given. Let’s remain in it, joyfully, and find what God is doing in the area, and join God in that.”* A congregation member

The Team members enjoyed far-ranging conversations with a diverse constituency, and they listened to a wide range of discussions. Throughout this process, they heard certain ideas and concerns repeated often, albeit in a variety of ways. The Team considered and discussed these repeating motifs intensively, seeking to distill them to the core essence of God’s leadings. From this exercise, the Team recognized the following recurring themes:

- Tab’s strength is in its commitment to Christ and the Word of God, faithfully taught.
- God has placed Tab at 34th and Central for a purpose, and we will remain here.
- Tab is a leader in the community, and has opportunities to provide even more leadership.
- Members desire ongoing spiritual growth.
- Members feel a need for deeper relationships within the congregation.
- Members feel a pull to deeper relationships with our neighbors in Mapleton-Fall Creek.
- Members have a passion for serving those in need in Mapleton-Fall Creek.

Further consideration and distillation led the Vision Renewal Team to the following statements of vision, offered with an understanding of our commitment to and need of Christ and the Word of God, and in recognition of the purpose of our place at 34th and Central:

#### **GREATER FAITH**

Tab will be a place where people are challenged to grow stronger in faith, to become equipped to serve, and to pursue opportunities for innovative and collaborative service.

#### **DEEPER RELATIONSHIPS**

Tab will be a catalyst for deeper, loving relationships that embrace differences for the sake of fellowship and service.

#### **A STRONGER COMMUNITY**

Tab will work in partnership with its neighbors to strengthen the Mapleton-Fall Creek community, advocate for justice and promote God’s shalom for all people.

Before examining these vision statements, it must first be understood that all are built on this overarching statement of vision: Our Vision is Christ, and Christ alone. God’s path leads to but one destination, a saving and loving relationship with our Creator God. Awakening to this promise of acceptance and fellowship in Christ is sufficient to sustain us in our life and work. Thus, in our fellowship with one another, in our interactions with fellow laborers for Christ,





in our service to and with our community, and in our prayers for our world, our distinctive focus must be to act as a “pleasing aroma” demonstrating the goodness and life-changing effect of Christ among those who know or seek God.

The following pages offer examinations of the rationale and insights behind each of these vision statements and glimpses into how the Vision Renewal Team believes each of these visions might benefit the Kingdom of God.

*“For we are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing.”*

2 Corinthians 2:15

## *Vision 1:*

### **GREATER FAITH**

**Tab will be a place where people are challenged to grow stronger in faith, to become equipped to serve and to pursue opportunities for innovative and collaborative service.**

*Tab will be a resource for Kingdom seekers who want to increase their connection to God, to provide opportunities for individual and congregational growth, and to support those opportunities with Biblical teaching, worship and prayer. It will prepare His people to be more Christlike through applied knowledge and engaged learning that results in a continually deepening faith and a foundation for serving God and the world.*

We know God desires that we seek after His heart and be about His Kingdom-building purposes. This process requires constant growth and the pursuit of maturity, which will deliver the ability to more fully recognize and live into God’s abiding love. Through this process, we gain knowledge not for the sake of knowledge, but so we can draw closer to the God who cares for and loves us each personally; share the Good News of our Lord and Savior as an ambassador of Christ; live in community and unity with one another through God’s love; and be empowered for faithful service.

The danger here is the ease with which we can believe that once one has accepted Christ, one has achieved all that is necessary. It’s easy to assume that if one attends Sunday services, one is worshipping sufficiently. It is easy to think that one can declare oneself to be a follower of Christ without actually following His exhortations to live fully into the life of a follower. But we know God calls us to forever pursue perfection, to constantly seek to better ourselves, and to, as the Psalmist’s said, to seek to be led “to a rock higher than I” (Psalm 61:2). In this, we avoid the stagnation of faith, and reject the danger of becoming lukewarm believers. In this, we accept Kingdom seeking as an active process that pursues a continually deepening faith, not simply a present and enduring one.

*“Tab has the opportunity to take people deeper in their faith.”*

A congregation member

Through this vision, we see Tab as a place where people meet and hear about the life-changing promises of Christ, and people find opportunities for spiritual growth and practical equipping for witness and service.

By embracing this vision, Tab and its people can achieve transformative growth that leads to more Christlike behavior, applied knowledge, deepening faith and the ability to demonstrate and explain our hope to the people around us, today and into the future. We pursue this, secure in the knowledge that our service is made more abundant as we learn and strengthen our spiritual gifts and the fruits of the Spirit.

## Vision 2:

### DEEPER RELATIONSHIPS

**Tab will be a catalyst for deeper, loving relationships that embrace differences for the sake of fellowship and service.**

*Tab will be a place that helps to create, nurture and deepen the relationships we have with God, our families, church family and neighbors.*

During the Vision Renewal Team's conversations with the congregation, the Team heard a consistent desire for deeper relationships within the congregation, within the neighborhood, within our homes, and throughout the community of God. We heard repeated desire for stronger relationships among members as well as between members and the people around us. We heard about a thirst for deeper connections that permit greater love and understanding.

The Team saw in this the many ways God calls us to be in relationship. From the moment God created Eve so that Adam would not be alone, to the times Christ urged us to love one another, and to this day when God brings us together in so many ways, we find ourselves compelled to relationship. When something stands in the way of that relationship, or prevents it from reaching its potential, we feel incomplete.

In its conversations, the Team heard from members and people outside of Tab a desire to overcome that incompleteness. Again and again, the Team heard people speak of a desire for "deeper relationships." We heard specific calls for an emphasis on small groups and a push to connect more meaningfully with our neighbors.

This vision must overcome some persistent barriers.

- We are a congregation dispersed over a wide geographical area. While many members regularly invest significant time to worship at our location—coming from broadly distributed urban, suburban and rural communities—this distance can serve as an impediment to attending meetings, events and other relationship-building activities at Tab.
- Our separate worship services split us into sub-congregations on Sunday morning, such that, even when we are "together," we are in ways separated.
- Our physical space is not always conducive to community gatherings or meaningful, informal connections.
- The Western Christian faith has suffered from a personal, private focus that has drawn God's people away from the community He desires.
- Deeper relationships take time and are not static. As such, they require more than the occasional meeting and brief greeting.
- We are culturally separated from many of our neighbors, passively set apart by differences that range from race and worship styles to personal priorities and life experiences.
- Our heritage as a congregation that provides services to our neighbors has created a relationship dynamic that can add to the division between us and the community surrounding Tab by focusing more on our role as provider than partner.

The good news is we have much to support progress in this vision. First and foremost, we have our commitment to God's call to be brothers and sisters in Christ. We also have the dedication to the community described in the 1966 Report, which stated that Christ called Tab to remain in the neighborhood to model God's Kingdom. We understand God's Kingdom does not separate by what we perceive as human differences. We have an earnest desire

*“And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”*

Hebrews 10:24–25

to honor the diversity of God’s creation, joyously, without sense of obligation or limitation. We know we are weaker as a people when we are divided.

In this context, this vision stands as a call to the people of Tab to reach further, to engage more, to risk often, and to forge deep and meaningful relationships that will bear fruit in the form of a united community in worship, life and every way that pleases God.

## Vision 3:

### **A STRONGER COMMUNITY**

**Tab will work in partnership with its neighbors to strengthen the Mapleton-Fall Creek community, advocate for justice and promote God’s shalom for all people.**

*Tab will be a congregation that partners with its in Mapleton-Fall Creek neighbors to meet the physical and spiritual needs of the community outside its doors, working to equip people to overcome obstacles, collaborating with individuals and organizations to advocate for justice, and recognizing that our faith and obedience will be judged by the way we walk with those in need.*

As the Vision Renewal Team talked with groups from the congregation, one member described her vision of Tab as a church connected to its community. She talked of being able to walk through the neighborhood and wave to someone on a porch, not as to a stranger but in the recognized greeting of neighbors. The simplicity of that wish reveals the heart of what many others said they seek: deeper relationships with the people who live in the community around Tab, and a means to work with those people to strengthen the neighborhood.

Fully achieving this vision would align with how author Robert D. Lupton describes “shalom” in his book *Compassion, Justice and the Christian Life*: “...the prevailing presence of peace and goodness in the relationship of God’s diverse family.” We see that as a sense of total well-being, of security and health in all aspects of life. We believe this is what God seeks for His people, what He asks God’s people to champion, and what He calls God’s people to bring to those who lack it. It is the Vision Renewal Team’s vision that Tab should become a relentless and irresistible force for this shalom within the Mapleton-Fall Creek community.

The forces resisting this shalom are considerable. Generational poverty, poor living conditions, drugs and violence, lack of basic services and lack of education define too many lives, including a great number of those in the neighborhood immediately surrounding Tab. Today, as always, Tab feels a desire to respond to these needs—a desire driven by a will to please God and serve His people.

That desire brought Tab to 34th and Central nearly 100 years ago, and a sense of call keeps us here today. We recognize that God has put us here for a purpose, and we accept the insight Paul offered in his letter to the Corinthians, in which he describes God’s grace as an “indescribable gift” to each of us.

This call was echoed often in our conversations with congregation members. When we asked, “What is Tab’s greatest opportunity for Impact?” we were almost always told our greatest opportunity sits right outside our doors, in our neighborhood.

*“We have to continue what we do best, and that is serving the neighborhood.”*

A congregation member

Of course, Tab’s impact right outside our doors is obvious. We reach our neighbors daily with established programs such as the Open Door Soup Kitchen, Tab Tutoring and the Recreation program, and programs we helped to launch, such as the Raphael Health Center, Christian Neighborhood Legal Clinic and The Oaks Academy.

As much as the congregation embraces and values these programs, however, the Vision Renewal Team discussed consistently heard concerns that Tab should re-assess its approaches with a commitment to ministries that offer “a hand up rather than a hand out.” While no one suggested we should end programs that allow us to be the hands and feet of Christ by meeting immediate physical, emotional and eternal needs of those around us, we did sense a desire for programs that—in terms framed by Lupton in his book *Toxic Charity*—offer not just “betterment” but also “development.” As Lupton put it, “Betterment improves conditions. Development strengthens capacity. Betterment gives a man a fish. Development teaches a man how to fish.” Ultimately, the goal is that the man not only knows how to fish, but actually owns the pond where he fishes.

In responding to these needs with a vision that is indeed more about development than betterment, we recognize it will be a long journey from softhearted, one-way charity to reciprocal, interdependent relationships. But, we also understand every person, no matter how destitute or broken, has something of worth to bring to the table. Therefore, we focus on developing, not merely listening to the concerns of our community, and advocating for the well-being of our community.

In this, we cast a vision of engaged advocacy and action on behalf of service and justice. Tab may serve as an organizational example of servant leadership, acting as a convener and catalyst for the flourishing of the community and God’s people. Tab will serve as a nucleus and nexus that draws people in so that they might be inspired, energized and sent out for the work of the Kingdom. Tab will work in partnership with its neighbors and neighboring organizations, working alongside and in concert with them for the strengthening of the neighborhood we share. Our building and campus will serve as tangible models of care for the physical beauty of the area, places to convene as a community and concrete symbols of God’s steadfast love for community.

*“Let justice and fairness flow like a river that never runs dry.” Amos 5:24*

Tab’s legacy of service to its community is strong and respected. This vision calls Tab not to bask in that legacy but, rather, to expand it, build on it and leverage it so we can be a partner in efforts to develop ourselves, our neighbors and our community.

## *Closing Thoughts*

As stated in the opening of this document, the Vision Renewal Team hopes this document serves as a challenge to Tab and its people. A challenge to constantly grow. A challenge to constantly push to achieve more for the Kingdom of God. A challenge to reach beyond complacency and beyond comfort, to venture into new territories and new experiences in the pursuit of a new era of impact.

This could be messy. There will be risk. The call is to wade into the mess, to faithfully take the risk, urged forward by the knowledge that doing so will allow us to partner with Christ for the redemption of His world.

As much as this document offers individual visions and ambitions, and as much as it challenges the people of Tab to stretch, push and grow, it also urges them to engage in an exciting opportunity to seek God's pleasure and blessing. It strives to remind us all that we are a part of a marvelous endeavor in which the God of all Creation has said, "You, Tab – you will be the means of redemption, the conduit of love and the recipient of My joy." It is an invitation to make the Kingdom greater, whether that is through small moments of human interaction or grand attacks on worldly injustice.

In the service of these purposes and desires, the Vision Renewal Team hopes this Report is received and read as a living document, subject to review and revision as God urges and directs so that we may always align with God's continued call to Tab. We trust and pray that Tab's "vision" will be constantly assessed and re-examined in light of God's grace and the continuing work of the Holy Spirit.

### **VISION TEAM MEMBERS**

Kate Ems  
L. John Gable, Senior Pastor  
Linda Fledderjohn  
Chad Lynn  
Paula Means, Missions Director

Sarah Noel  
Barton B. Ost  
Julie Scott  
John B. Thomas  
Jennifer Weyreter

1



Greater  
Faith

2

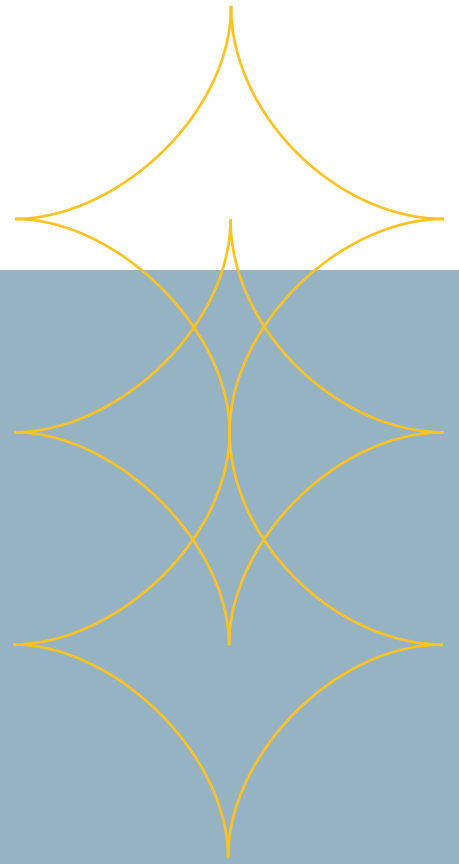


Deeper  
Relationships

3



A Stronger  
Community



# Addendum

## To The 2016 Vision Renewal Report

In its Report, the Vision Renewal Team sought to offer focused visions that would guide decision making, rather than programs that would prescribe actions.

However, in the course of our deliberations and conversations, we were struck by a number of concrete actions that would seem to be logical additions to Tab's programs. In many cases, these were specific requests from congregation members or what seemed to be obvious answers to members' concerns. We humbly include them in alphabetical order as an addendum to our Report, offering them as observations, not as directives to be considered as part of our formal Report.

### CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Through the decades, the primary beneficiaries of Tab's outreach and service have been children and youth. For example, Tab's 90-year-old Recreation ministry focuses entirely on children, and Mark Wittig, a missionary we support in Colombia, brings the message of Christ's love daily to thousands of children and adult volunteers through an urban soccer program. Within the last few years, Tab also has supported the Kenya-based Umoja Project, which responds to the "multiple needs of vulnerable children" through the provision of medical care and the supply of daily food, especially to orphans. Many congregation members suggest this focus on children should continue to be central to our mission.

*"Tab's focus on children is part of our DNA locally as well as globally."*

*A congregation member*

### COLLABORATION

As the Vision Renewal Team talked with Mapleton-Fall Creek community leaders and pastors from area churches, we heard often about the need for increased collaboration and coordination of services in the community. They encouraged Tab to engage in a renewed sense of collaboration and partnership in our community service and outreach, and some specifically suggested that Tab should provide more organizational leadership.

### DIVERSITY IN MEMBERSHIP

We have the understanding that God's Kingdom does not differentiate between any person or style of worship. We have an earnest desire to honor the diversity of God's creation, joyously, without sense of obligation or limitation. We know we are weaker as a people when we are divided. Our vision is a place of worship that mirrors our diverse world and confirms God's value of each person regardless of race, education, gender, nationality or economic status.

### FACILITIES IMPROVEMENTS

Tab's building may not be ideally suited to meet many of Tab's fellowship, education and mission needs, and especially falls short in terms of space for creating community. We enter and leave a beautiful sanctuary by narrow halls to small openings that connect us to the parking lot more easily than to places of fellowship. Open spaces near the sanctuary entrances would invite conversation, prayer or friendly outreach. Design changes could also make our building more attractive and inviting to our guests and neighbors.

### FOOD INSECURITY

While hunger and food insecurity have long been an issue in the neighborhood surrounding Tab, the problem became worse recently when the Double 8 Foods store closed. While discussing and considering this problem, the Vision Renewal Team heard two themes emerge most prominently. There is a need for greater coordination of services among food providers,

and there is a concern we have fallen into the trap of providing a Band-Aid solution to systemic issues. The vision here is of more collaboration among service organizations, and more effort to provide improvement rather than assistance.

### **GOD'S SHALOM**

While the Vision Renewal Team Report speaks of seeking to bring about God's shalom, this specific idea sees God's Shalom as the actual title of an initiative. Under this vision, Tab would serve as a hub for the pursuit of justice through advocacy and action. A sort of entrepreneurial mission incubator, Tab would provide a center for Christian lay and professional leaders promoting the Church's response to God's concern for justice and fairness. Tab would be recognized as a meeting place for the development and launching of innovative programs that harness the strengths and assets of our neighborhood to enhance the quality of life.

*“Shalom is not merely the absence of crime on the street, but it is also the prevailing presence of peace and goodness in the relationship of God’s diverse family.”*

Author Robert D. Lupton

### **MACRO PROBLEMS**

While there is a passion for helping to meet the immediate needs of the community, the Vision Renewal Team heard from community and church leaders that what is truly needed is advocacy and service to address the systemic needs, such as low-quality education, a lack of available jobs, the food desert and more. A number of people urged Tab to become more involved in addressing these “bigger” issues at the same time it tends to immediate needs.

### **NEIGHBORS AS MEMBERS**

Our vision is Tab as a church that seeks participation by our neighbors in our worship and service. Our neighborhood has many churches, and yet many neighborhood residents do not find a reason to be in fellowship and worship. Deepening relationship with our neighbors starts with an invitation to visit, in fellowship and worship, with the reciprocal promise that we, in turn, will visit with our neighbors.

### **RECREATION MINISTRY**

Tab Rec is recognized across the Indianapolis metropolitan area and has a strong reputation as a positive community resource. Arguably the most well-known of Tab's community ministries, there are opportunities for Tab members to become more actively engaged and involved in the Tab Rec program. With additional congregational volunteers, programming could be expanded to serve not just children, but also adults. And while we are blessed with an amazing Rec Field, other facilities could be improved or added, including, but not limited to, a community fitness center.

### **SMALL GROUPS**

Opportunities for small group settings, at Tab and throughout our urban community, were mentioned often, in hopes of a way to offer any person interested in a deepening fellowship with God and one another an easy invitation into a group of fellow believers. This vision would see Tab facilitating small group formation and supporting the vitality and work of small groups. Through this process, Tab could address both the spiritual growth of its members and the need for increased fellowship.

### **TIMES FOR SHARING MEALS**

Sometimes, the most caring and opening words to a future friendship are, “How about grabbing a bite to eat?” The intimacy fostered around a meal is the same offered by our Lord, the bread of life. While not offered as a necessary new programming initiative, sharing meals is a habit that may be encouraged and facilitated as a means to deeper relationships.



## WORSHIP UNIFICATION

There is great appreciation for the variety of gifts and talents offered in worship at Tab. One expression of that community of faith in worship is in the combined, intergenerational presence in the sanctuary joined in word, song, praise and teaching. There is a community dynamic that assures us all of our part and unity in the body of Christ and our sharing in a common fellowship and mission. It is our only place where we all regularly gather to extend the handshake of fellowship, prepare our way into a new week with God by our side, and deepen relationships with one another and our Lord. Many feel Tab could benefit from a season of worship unity with fewer fragmented worship services.

## DISCERNMENT TOOLS

While the Vision Renewal Report spotlights focused visions, we suggest that it be used as a discernment and diagnostic tool for all of our ministries and programs, current and potential. A standard rubric could be applied to our existing ministries as a means to focus and deepen them, and as an evaluation tool as we consider engaging in new and emerging ministry opportunities.

Does this program/ministry/new opportunity:

1. Promote reconciliation?
  - a. With God? How? (specifics)
  - b. With others? How? (specifics)
2. Promote Spiritual Growth?
  - a. Deepening of faith? How?
    - i. For individuals? How? (specifics)
    - ii. For the Church? How? (specifics)
  - b. Sharing faith? How? (specifics)
  - c. Equipping for service? How? (specifics)
  - d. Welcoming in to fellowship? How? (specifics)
3. Promote deeper, loving relationships?
  - a. Within families? How? (specifics)
  - b. Within the Church family? How? (specifics)
  - c. With our neighbors? How? (specifics)
  - d. With God? How? (specifics)
4. Strengthen the community?
  - a. Mapleton - Fall Creek? How? (specifics)
  - b. Specific target population? How? (specifics)
  - c. Advocate for justice? How? (specifics)
  - d. Promote God's Shalom? How? (specifics)
  - e. Promote collaboration and partnership with others? How? (specifics)

## VISION TEAM MEMBERS

Kate Ems  
L. John Gable, Senior Pastor  
Linda Fledderjohn  
Chad Lynn  
Paula Means, Missions Director

Sarah Noel  
Barton B. Ost  
Julie Scott  
John B. Thomas  
Jennifer Weyreter



# Session's Charge

## *Commission to the Vision Renewal Team*

### **CELEBRATION**

We acknowledge God's gifts and blessings on Tabernacle Presbyterian Church and thank God and celebrate those blessings and in the spirit of gratitude embrace the opportunity to seek God's call.

### **CALL TO RENEWAL**

The Session of Tabernacle Presbyterian Church commissions the Vision Renewal Team to engage the congregation in responding to God's reaffirming and transforming call to demonstrate the Kingdom of God in this place at this time.

### **INSPIRATION**

This commission shall be infused with God's Word and Spirit, through study, meditation and prayer. We trust that through obedience to God's leadings, the work of the Vision Renewal Team, in partnership with our members, pastors, staff, friends and neighbors, will bring about a future in alignment with God's will for Tab.

### **PROCESS**

The Vision Renewal Team will lead the congregation through an exploration process that will enable the congregation to revisit its vision, core values, mission and purpose and address the driving questions and needs of Kingdom living and Kingdom building.

### **PARTICIPATION**

From the outset, we recognize that the Vision Renewal Team's job is not to speak for the congregation, but to gather and focus the collective voice of Tab. In this pursuit the Vision Renewal Team will invite Tab's members, pastors, staff, friends, neighbors and community leaders to participate in the conversation thereby attaining valuable perspectives and penetrating insights.

### **REPORT**

The Final Report of the Vision Renewal Team will identify current and future priorities to help guide stewardship decisions regarding operational and strategic allocations of resources.

### **PROCLAMATION**

We encourage the Vision Renewal Team to proclaim the passion and commitment of a renewed sense of God's call on our lives individually and as a strong and healthy congregation committed to God's leading.

### **GUIDED ACTION**

The work of the Vision Renewal Team will serve as an operational guide for forward-looking decision making, a monitoring tool to measure our progress, and a call to re-dedicate our lives to the work of God's Kingdom together and with our neighbors.

### **JOYFUL DEDICATION**

We prayerfully anticipate that the discernment of the Vision Renewal Team will result in a reinvigorated dedication to the pursuit of God's will purposefully, intentionally and joyfully.

Congregational Response: We as a congregation openly offer our prayers, help and enthusiasm. We offer our willingness to change, to grow and to learn, with faith in our ability to live into the Church God calls us to be.

“You make known to  
me the path of life;  
you will fill me with joy  
in your presence.”

PSALM 16:11



**TABERNACLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
418 East 34th Street, Indianapolis, IN 46205  
(317) 923.5458 | [www.tabpres.org](http://www.tabpres.org)