

CORE VALUES¹

August 2007

... About Our Core Values:

The Tabernacle Baptist Church, located in the heart of Richmond Virginia's historic Fan District, is a part of the worldwide and ecumenical body of Christ. We are a small, inclusive faith community with an open and friendly spirit. This is a place where persons from far and wide come to share in a unique and comfortable environment—with an intimate and loving congregation—while working together to display Christ's love to the world.

We believe God wants us to make a difference in our neighborhood, country, and world through the faithful use of our time, talents, resources, and location. We value the strength of Baptist freedoms which include a belief in the priesthood of all believers, the freedom to interpret scripture under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the autonomy of the local church, and the separation between the church and the state. We are a church striving together as one to embody the values of worship, fellowship, mission, and discipleship.

We value:

Worship.

We strive to be a congregation rooted deeply in the participatory worship of God, where intergenerational relationships are nurtured and all persons are encouraged to share their stories through creative and meaningful expression.

It is not uncommon for multiple persons, children and adults alike, to facilitate and lead worship through the gifts of music, proclamation, and written word. This experiential approach continually reveals the blessing of a diverse family and offers a level of depth which honors our God-given intellect and curiosity.

- ...providing room for all persons to share their God-given gifts and creative talents
- ...creating awareness of and praying for local, national, and international needs and concerns
- ...prayerfully planning thoughtful worship experiences
- ...utilizing the lectionary cycle to be connected to churches worldwide each Sunday, as well as for the lectionary's call to wrestle with challenging scripture passages
- ...providing a wide range of music to reinforce the worship theme and enhance the worship experience.

¹ Draft #4



Fellowship.

We believe God wants us to genuinely care for one another, and we strive to create an environment where all persons can be known by name.

Everything we do, be it worship, service, study, mission, or fellowship, builds community and reliance between our Creator and ourselves. We therefore strive to be deliberate in our planning and implementation of ministries, programs, and events so that potential for fellowship and cooperation may bloom and thrive.

- ...Family-based Meals on Wednesday Evenings
- ...Inter-generational Activities, including Creative Worship and Bible Studies
- ...Adult and Young Adult Dinners and Fellowship
- ...“Faith and Film”: Monthly dinner gathering to view and discuss thought-provoking movies
- ...Hospital and Homebound Visitation
- ...Picnics for both Congregation and Neighborhood
- ...Activities for Children
- ...Children’s and Adult Choirs
- ...Trips and Activities for Youth
- ...Intergenerational Mission Work
- ...Homebound Visitation

Mission.

Mission is the fundamental reality of our Christian life together at Tabernacle Baptist Church. We are Christian because God has called us to work collectively for the fulfillment of God's purpose for humanity. In other words, our local church, as a part of the larger universal Church, has been given the task of sharing in God's mission to the world, which results in many diverse social ministries. By combining mission education, unique partnerships, and hands-on service to our neighborhood, country and world, Tabernacle seeks to "take the whole gospel to the whole person", as was demonstrated by Jesus' ministry on earth. This means that the spiritual, physical, and social well-being of all those we encounter is always at the forefront of our minds. The faithful use of our time, talents, resources, and very lives in community are central to our commitment to share in God's mission. As a result, we form relationships as we serve together which proclaim the life-giving and life-changing message of Christ.

- ...Responding to the concerns and needs of our neighborhood by providing a weekly Clothes Closet and Food Pantry
- ...Partnering with other inner-city ministries like Metro Baptist Church in New York City and Hyaets in Charlotte, NC
- ...Offering an annual Dog Wash for our Fan neighbors
- ...The Fan Feast: Thanksgiving dinner with our Food Bank and Clothes Closet patrons
- ...Praying for and working with our international missionaries, the Coppages, who serve with the deaf in Hungary
- ...Highlighting worldwide issues and concerns like the crisis in Sudan, worldwide poverty, the "Invisible Children" in Sudan
- ...Responding to emergencies of Hurricane Katrina and the Tsunami of 2004 by...
- ...Becoming both a regional collection center for goods to be sent to the Gulf Coast for Hurricane Katrina relief, as well as a temporary shelter for Gulf Coast refugees
- ...Offering studies on the world's religions so we may better understand our neighbors.

Discipleship.

We are a Christ-centered family equipping persons to discover their calling in the world through spiritual formation, leadership development, and faithful living. Prayer, Scripture study, mission, and fellowship are all critical factors in the continued development of Christ's followers.

We began as a small Mission School in 1887. The spiritual development of young people has been a priority for the church since our inception. We strive to continue to build on our rich heritage by providing multiple opportunities for growth, development and service for people of all ages.

- ...Nurturing a growing Children's Ministry that engages children in worship services and other ministry activities.
- ...Active and challenging young adult Bible Study on Monday nights
- ...Encouraging the discovery of spiritual gifts through encouraging church members to try new avenues of ministry and leadership
- ...Providing Sunday School classes for all ages
- ...Engaging Wednesday night classes that address everything from Apartheid in South Africa and the Genocide in Sudan to the in-depth study on the Sermon on the Mount and blanket and quilt-making for newborn babies.
- ...Adult women's Bible study and lunch on Thursday mornings
- ...Women's retreats to....
- ...Community opportunities for further education on topics like end of life care and homeless intervention
- ...Using our publications—bulletin boards, worship bulletins, newsletters, artwork throughout the church—as educational tools.