



Report by the Vision Committee
Hayes Barton United Methodist Church
May 2025



2025-2030 Vision

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A Calling for Our Church

Dear Members and Friends of Hayes Barton UMC,

I write to you with deep gratitude and hopeful expectation, as we mark the culmination of our Vision Committee's journey of discernment and planning.

While part of this journey is new—or will be new to us—our journey as a church in Hayes Barton is old. It is a story of how God has sustained this congregation for the past 90 years. It is a story of God's provision and guidance—and of a loving and resilient body of believers who have faithfully followed God. In 1936, a small group of believers came together. Without a church building of their own, they gathered where they could: at the old Hayes Barton School, trusting that the church was more than just bricks and mortar. Nearly a century later, Hayes Barton United Methodist Church carries on. Our congregation – now nearly 3,000 strong – has the opportunity to dream new dreams for our congregation as we embark on a new season of life together.

As a church, we've experienced several seasons of change since we last discerned our Vision and Mission in 2016. Some of these "seasons" were not insignificant: COVID-19, staffing and leadership changes (I'm grateful to be here!), disaffiliation within the Methodist church—all in addition to smaller changes across Hayes Barton UMC. These challenges forced us into a time of managing reactively. But by the fourth quarter of 2024, we were ready and able to shift our focus to being proactive. Thus, we began a process of envisioning how we all want to move forward. We have an amazing congregation of thoughtful disciples with many faithful expressions of faith and service. Embarking on this visioning process was an opportunity to listen to the congregation and staff and discern themes for a collective vision we can all unite around and work towards.

So, last fall, we engaged a consulting firm with deep experience serving churches and assembled a strong Vision Committee. During the past nine months, this group has prayerfully and thoughtfully listened to you, our congregation. Through 25 in-depth interviews, six in-person listening sessions, and a robust church-wide survey with 273 participants, we heard your hopes, concerns, and dreams.

In terms of strengths – you are proud of this church and many of you are deeply engaged in its life. You believe we excel at the most important things – worship, music, spiritual formation, and service opportunities. You see us as a grounded and welcoming church.

You also weren't shy about sharing where we need to improve – particularly in the areas of Youth ministry and building community. During the Casper Holroyd days, Hayes Barton was widely considered to have Raleigh's best youth program. We've lost momentum in that program and need to build on the fruits of the JOY class of the past while also addressing some of the challenges it faces currently, so it can again be a thriving and central part of our Youth Ministry. Furthermore, many of you seek deeper connections and community through the church.

As we listened to your many perspectives, I reflected that being church together is harder than ever in this more distracted, digital world. The world often conspires to pull us away from faith as iPhones bombard us with “critically important” news and Facebook posts tell us there is a new photo to see, and calendar invites for a youth soccer game sometimes come for Sunday morning.

The habits of faith must have been simpler in simpler times. Yet, we do not live in simpler times. So, I am struck that our calling is simple but our work is hard. Our calling is to make our church more relevant, accessible, and central to your life. Yet the work of doing this is harder than ever.

The detailed plan unanimously agreed upon by the Vision Committee is included at the end of this report. It is organized around five core initiatives:

1. Strengthening faith development and fellowship among children and youth.
2. Investing strategically in our people and resources.
3. Creating a welcoming and unified church home.
4. Offering lifelong spiritual formation for all ages.
5. Expanding our outreach with compassion and relationship.

Each of these initiatives is deeply rooted in the gospel call to love God and neighbor. And each invites **you** to become more spiritually engaged—not just as participants, but as leaders, servants, and seekers. *I encourage every member—whether you’ve been here for decades or have just found your church home—to step more fully into the life of this congregation.* Join a Sunday School or covenant group. Re-engage with worship. Serve in a ministry. Invite someone new. Pray daily for the Spirit’s guidance in your life and in the life of our church.

Thank you for being part of a church family that listens deeply, acts boldly, and seeks to live fully for Christ. As you digest the findings and plan that emerged from this visioning process, we value your thoughts and reactions as we iron out the implementation phase. We will host office hours in the church parlor to discuss on June 15th and June 22nd from 10am-11am. I remain grateful to be on this journey with each of you. May our season ahead be marked by joy, courage, and the transforming power of God’s love.

With gratitude and hope,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Beam". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and "B".

David Beam
Lead Pastor

Background

For the past several years, Hayes Barton United Methodist Church (HBUMC) has gone through a number of changes. From the transition of long-term senior pastor Rick Clayton, to changes in the United Methodist Church, and the pandemic, the church has been in a season of responding to changes. Now on this side of transition, HBUMC leadership desires to be proactive and discern as a community where God is calling them to lead and serve in the coming season of the church.

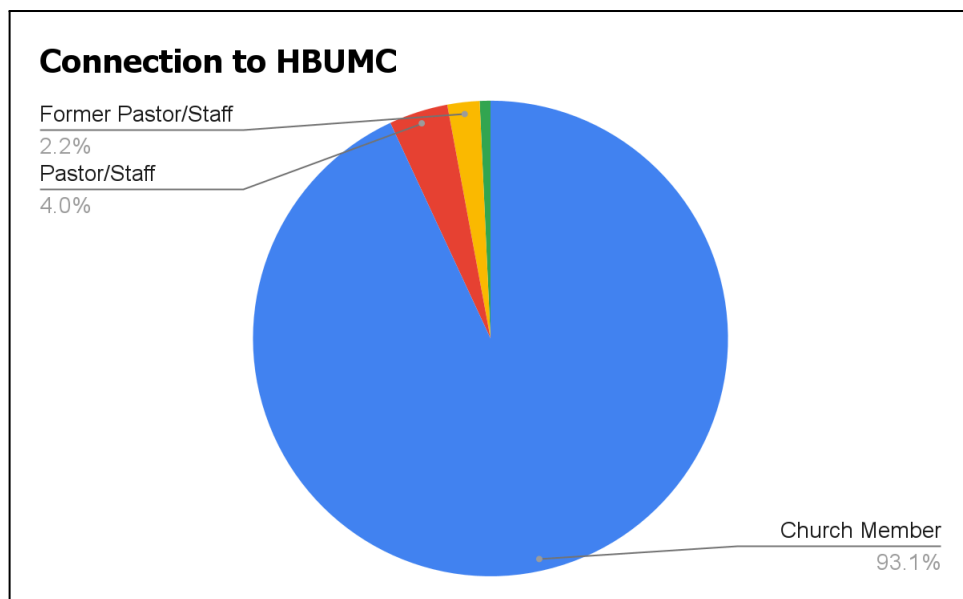
HBUMC engaged Armstrong McGuire to assist in developing their strategic plan as part of a visioning process. Listening to the congregation was the first step in that process and this Executive Summary provides highlights from that work.

A total of 198 individual interviews, focus groups, and listening sessions were conducted, followed by a church-wide survey that garnered responses from 273 church members. Compared to other churches of similar size, this is a high response and shows strong engagement by membership. This diverse mix of qualitative and quantitative data collection methods provided a robust foundation for understanding the congregation's needs, perceptions, and aspirations.

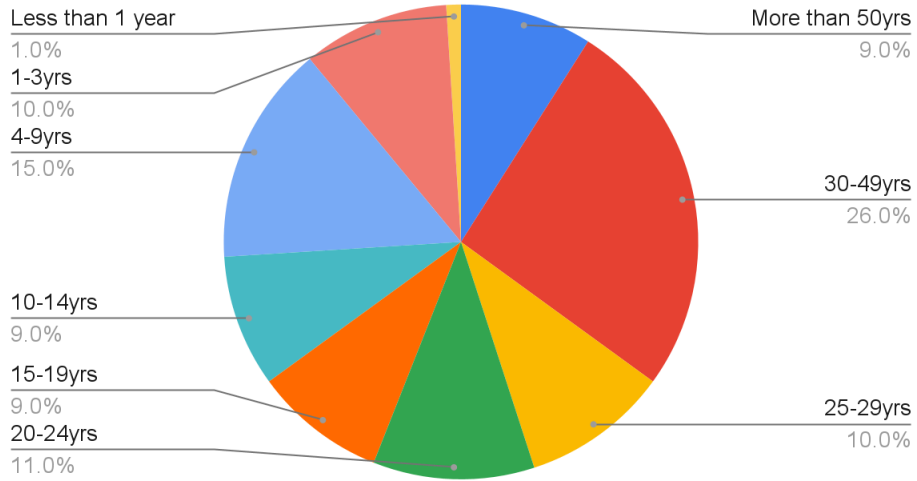
Listening Interviews and Sessions:

- Staff: 9 interviews
- Staff Focus Group: 5 attendees
- Engaged Membership: 25 interviews
- Committee Survey Responses: 11
- Youth Focus Group: 12 attendees
- Listening Sessions: 136 attendees

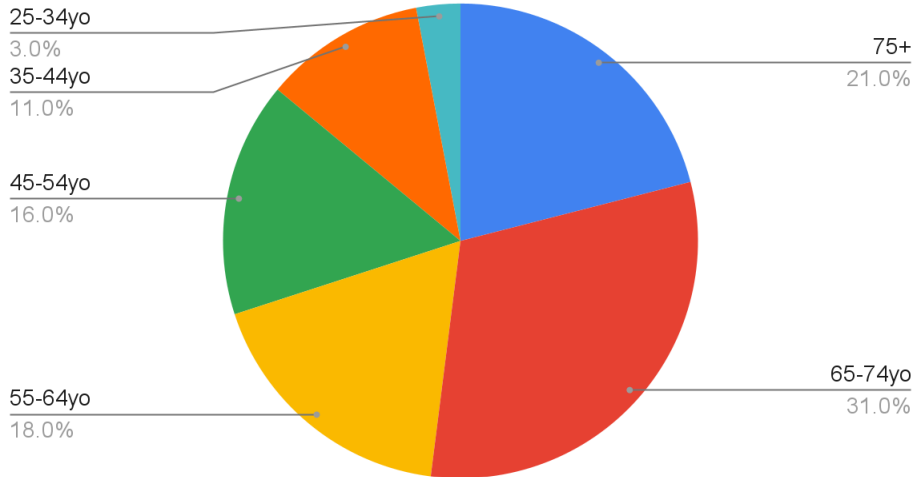
Listening Survey (273 Responses):



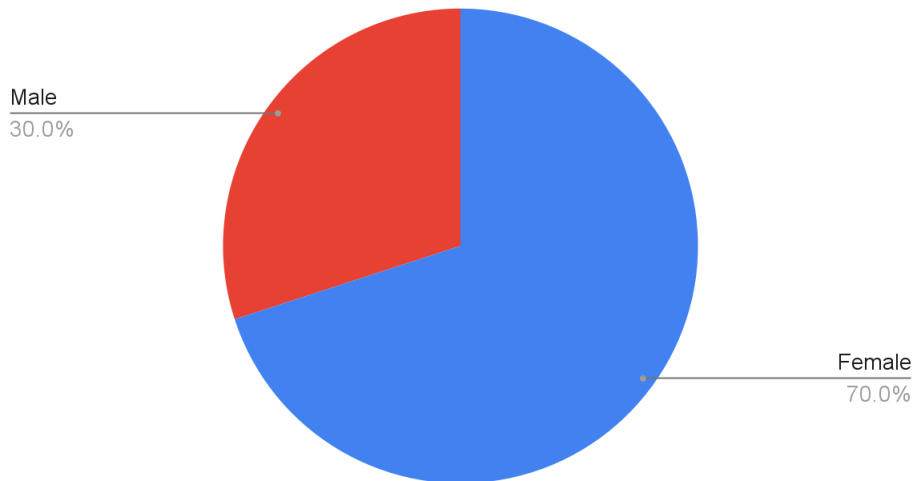
Years Connected to HBUMC



AGE



GENDER



Landscape Scan – Faith in America

Across the United States, churches are grappling with an unprecedented shift in religious engagement. A recent book, *The Great Dechurching* by Jim Davis and Michael Graham, reveals that *over 40 million adults who once attended church regularly now do so less than once a year—the largest and fastest religious shift in U.S. history*. Consider:

1. **Over 40 Million Dechurched Adults**—More than 40 million American adults who used to attend church regularly (at least once per month) now attend less than once per year. This shift is described as the largest and fastest religious change in American history.
2. **Mainline Protestant Decline**—Mainline Protestant denominations, including United Methodists, have experienced one of the steepest drops. 37% of formerly active members are now disengaged.
3. **People Are Drifting Away, Not Intentionally Leaving**—About 75% report simply drifting away, influenced by life changes, cultural convenience, and new habits (e.g., formed during the pandemic).
4. **Cultural Competition for Sunday**—Attendance is increasingly crowded out by "the four S's": sleeping, streaming, scrolling, and sports. Church is often not rejected but deprioritized.
5. **Weekly Church Attendance at 20%**—Down from 42% in the 1990s to about 20% in 2022. This decline is most pronounced among young adults.
6. **Membership Below 50% Nationwide**—In 2021, Gallup reported that less than half of Americans belong to a church, mosque, or synagogue. This marks a historic low, down from 70% in 1999.
7. **Generational Disaffiliation**—Over 40% of Millennials and Gen Z identify as religiously unaffiliated. Younger generations are significantly less likely to return to organized religion.¹

While some have left because of deep wounds or church-based trauma, the majority have quietly drifted away due to cultural inertia, competing priorities, and a growing sense that church is no longer essential to their lives. Life transitions, over-packed schedules, and habits formed during the COVID-19 pandemic have accelerated this trend. Interestingly, the church today competes less with controversy and more with convenience: people are choosing “sleeping, streaming, scrolling, and sports” over Sunday worship.

However, this is not a rejection of faith altogether—many of the de-churched remain spiritually curious and open to reengagement, especially if churches offer authenticity, meaningful relationships, and tangible care for emotional and mental health.

Churches must recognize that most who leave do not do so in anger—they simply stop attending. There is still openness to return, particularly to churches that offer:

- Authentic community
- Emotional and mental health support

¹ Number 1-4 based on *The Great Dechurching*, Davis & Graham (Zondervan, 2023). Number 5 based on the Gallup, 2022 Church Attendance Survey; Number 6 based on Gallup, "U.S. Church Membership Falls Below Majority for First Time" (2021); Number 7 based on Pew Research Center, "Modeling the Future of Religion in America" (2022)

- Tangible impact in the local neighborhood
- A clear sense of belonging and identity

The dechurched population represents a mission field of spiritually open but institutionally disconnected people. For churches seeking renewal, responding with empathy, intentionality, and relevance is essential.

This presents both a sobering reality and a profound opportunity: **the future church must be one that is relational over transactional, formational over programmatic, and intentionally responsive to the lived realities of those it seeks to serve.**

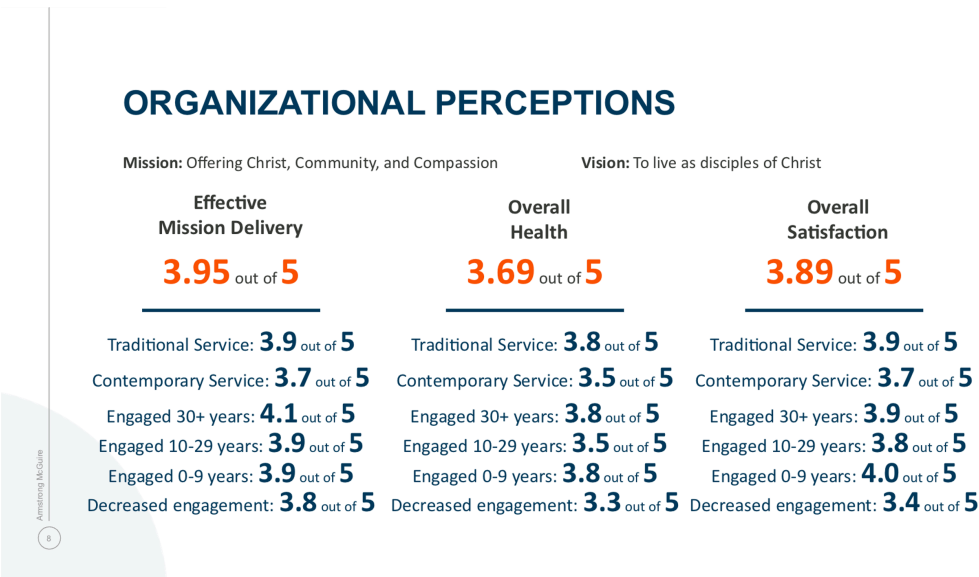
Listening Findings – Hayes Barton’s Membership Speaks

Church Membership Perceptions

As part of its strategic visioning process, HBUMC undertook a congregation-wide listening effort designed to surface insights, perspectives, and priorities from those who know the church best—its members, staff, and leaders. This process, led by Mendi Nieters at Armstrong McGuire, included nearly 200 in-person touchpoints: interviews with staff and engaged members, youth and adult focus groups, and six church-wide listening sessions. A comprehensive survey rounded out the effort, receiving responses from 273 individuals. The goal was to understand the current experience of church life and how the congregation envisions its future.

What emerged was a portrait of a deeply committed church—one rooted in relationships, tradition, and a genuine desire to serve Christ through community and compassion. HBUMC is widely seen as a welcoming and inclusive place, especially for those who have been connected to it for many years. Many described the church as a spiritual home where friendships are formed and faith is nurtured. The pastoral staff and music ministry were named repeatedly as vital strengths, contributing to the warmth and richness of worship.

In terms of overall organizational health, the congregation rated the church's effectiveness in mission delivery quite positively (3.95 out of 5). Satisfaction levels were strong across both traditional and contemporary services, though slightly higher among long-tenured members and those engaged in traditional worship.



Spiritual formation and worship remain central to what draws people to HBUMC and keeps them involved. Sermons were described as both theologically grounded and personally relevant, and the church offers a wide range of opportunities for learning and connection—Sunday School, covenant groups, Bible studies, and more. *Still, many respondents expressed a desire to go deeper.* They

called for more in-depth Bible study, expanded spiritual practices, and resources to help integrate faith into daily life. These calls were particularly strong among parents, younger adults, and those newer to the church.

While the church is undeniably strong in many areas, several key challenges also came to light. *First among them is a concern about children’s and youth ministries.* These programs, once viewed as robust, are now seen by many as less effective and less engaging. There is also a *noted need to broaden volunteer engagement.* A small core of dedicated individuals currently carries much of the church’s ministry work, leading to fatigue and missed opportunities to draw in newer or younger members.

Another area of concern is the *contemporary worship service.* While we have made recent changes, during our listening sessions, some described it as lacking energy and leadership, with a need for revitalization.

Additionally, *long-standing facility concerns—such as parking and aging infrastructure—continue to limit both accessibility and our community’s overall impact.*

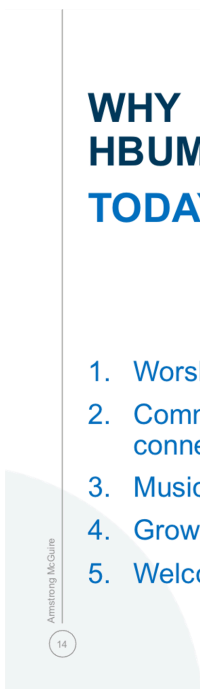
The survey and sessions also explored how members came to HBUMC and what keeps them there. For many long-timers, it was the church’s welcoming spirit, rich music, and deep United Methodist roots that drew them in.

**WHY
HBUMC?
ORIGINALLY**

- 1. Church home
- 2. Welcoming
- 3. Worship
- 4. Youth
- 5. United Methodist Church

YEARS CONNECTED TO HBUMC	ALL	LESS THAN 9	10-29 YEARS	30+ YEARS
Looking for a church home	58.7%	71.2%	64.2%	45.8%
Welcoming environment	57.4%	59.3%	71.6%	41.0%
Worship	45.0%	50.9%	53.7%	28.9%
Youth and family opportunities	43.8%	35.6%	52.6%	42.2%
United Methodist Church	39.3%	35.6%	44.2%	34.9%
Music	36.4%	47.5%	36.8%	27.7%
Faith and spiritual growth	36.0%	40.7%	41.1%	24.1%
Community and connection	32.6%	35.6%	40.0%	20.5%
Mission and service opportunities	21.5%	23.7%	26.3%	12.1%
Inclusive church	20.7%	25.4%	24.2%	13.3%
Family members attended	19.0%	17.0%	9.5%	30.1%
Tradition	18.6%	15.3%	23.2%	16.9%
Someone asked me to attend	15.7%	6.8%	17.9%	19.3%
Getting married	3.3%	0.0%	4.2%	4.8%

Today, worship, community connection, and spiritual growth are cited as the primary reasons people stay. This shift from “why I came” to “why I remain” reflects an evolving relationship with the church—one rooted more in spiritual nourishment and belonging than initial outreach or program offerings.

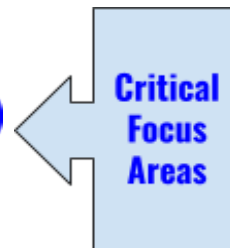


	ALL	LESS THAN 9	10-29 YEARS	30+ YEARS
Worship	63.7%	59.7%	63.8%	65.4%
Community and connection	58.2%	49.1%	66.0%	54.3%
Music	56.5%	64.9%	51.1%	56.8%
Faith and spiritual growth	54.0%	61.4%	47.9%	55.6%
Welcoming environment	52.7%	56.1%	56.4%	45.7%
Inclusive church	39.7%	35.1%	39.4%	43.2%
Mission and service opportunities	37.1%	33.3%	35.1%	39.5%
United Methodist Church	36.7%	31.6%	39.4%	35.8%
Youth and family opportunities	29.5%	36.8%	31.9%	23.5%
Tradition	22.8%	15.8%	21.3%	30.9%
Family members attended	13.9%	15.8%	9.6%	17.3%
Looking for a church home	11.0%	17.5%	14.9%	2.5%
Someone asked me to attend	0.8%	0.0%	2.1%	0.0%
Getting married	0.4%	0.0%	1.1%	0.0%

Looking forward, the congregation identified several top priorities for HBUMC's future. *The clearest call was to invest in youth and family ministries, followed closely by building a stronger sense of community and deepening spiritual formation for all ages. Outreach and community engagement were also named as essential and part of HBUMC's long-standing tradition.* Inclusion and diversity, while not among the top four priorities, were lifted up by many as vital to long-term health and relevance.

Top Ranked Future Direction Priorities – Youth and Children is #1 Focus

Youth and Family Programs	73%	180
Strong Sense of Community	71%	174
Spiritual Formation and Education	58%	141
Outreach and Community Engagement	50%	122
Inclusion and Diversity	33%	80
Enhanced Communication and Engagement	23%	57
Facility Utilization and Sustainability	21%	52
Empowerment of Lay Leadership	19%	46



Perhaps the strongest signal we received was the collective sense that our Youth and Children's programs need revitalization. Several excerpts from the interviews and listening sessions made this point again and again:

- "We used to have 200 participants in youth group. Now there are 20 on a good day."
- "The parents used to be involved in the youth program. We don't have same volunteer bench"
- "In the heyday, someone once told me that Casper Holroyd [a youth program volunteer] was spending 30 hours per week on the program and had a full-time staff member from his insurance agency supporting it. We don't have anything like that resource commitment today."

The 2025-2030 Vision

The Vision Committee of Hayes Barton United Methodist Church put forth a vision and strategic framework for 2025 to 2030. The Vision Committee fully participated in the listening sessions, did a detailed review of the survey data and church feedback with Armstrong McGuire, and then identified priorities to focus on going forward. The Church Council approved the plan ([see Appendix](#)) on May 27, 2025.

Vision: To become fully alive as followers of Jesus.

We strive to be awake to the presence of Jesus in the world and in our lives so that we are able to offer our full selves to him.

Mission: Choosing Christ, Community, and Compassion

We desire for all our thoughts, decisions, and actions to be shaped by the love of the Father, the way of Jesus Christ, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Values: We are welcoming, vibrant and engaged:

Welcoming – *We practice inclusiveness and compassion, ensuring everyone is invited to participate fully and authentically. We respect traditions while embracing innovative expressions of faith. We foster a supportive environment that nurtures connections across generations, where all feel connected, valued, and a sense of belonging.*

Vibrant – *We value and cultivate a dynamic and spirited community, where worship and activities are engaging and full of life. We strive to create an atmosphere that energizes and inspires, encouraging every member to express their faith joyfully and to participate in our communal life.*

Engaged – *Our commitment to ministry is relational and hands-on. We commit to intentional spiritual development, providing structured and supportive pathways for all to deepen their faith and understanding through study, prayer, service, and fellowship. We believe in physical and spiritual discipleship that supports our community and the wider world, understanding discipleship and service as a fundamental expression of our faith.*

Core Initiatives:

1. Strengthen faith development and fellowship among children and youth through a robust family ministry program.
2. Sustain our foundation by strategically investing in capital and human resources for enduring growth and impact.
3. Foster and cultivate a church home that makes all feel welcomed as we worship and come to the table as one community.
4. Invite lifelong spiritual growth by developing opportunities for education, formation, and contemplation.
5. Enhance missional outreach through a relational approach that fosters dialogue and introduces diverse avenues for service.

The Path Forward

Ultimately, this listening process affirmed that HBUMC is a church with strong foundations: a caring community, meaningful worship, and a deep desire to grow in faith and service. At the same time, the church stands at a crossroads. To remain vital and welcoming to future generations, it must address gaps in engagement, invest in youth and family programming, nurture a deep sense of community and belonging, and maintain the physical infrastructure and team along the way.

We are grateful the voice of the congregation was clear—there is an eagerness to build on the strengths of HBUMC’s past and present, while also looking for fresh energy, clear direction, and renewed purpose as we step into the future.

With a renewed and approved Vision, the hard work of implementing it begins. This includes numerous initiatives laid out in the following plan. Priorities for the second half of 2025 include:

- Survey the congregation to determine the capacity and interest in a Capital Campaign to fully fund priorities articulated in the Vision
- Hire a permanent full-time youth director (broad search, use a search firm if needed)
- Create a Youth Discipleship Core Team consisting of adult and youth leaders
- Implement annual surveys on Children and Youth programming
- Add signage welcoming visitors at the playground and reassess internal signage to make our facilities warm, hospitable, and easier for guests to navigate
- Increase participation in Sunday Schools and other opportunities for intentional spiritual formation
- Invite new members to participate, teach, serve, and develop their spiritual gifts--also allowing them to find deeper points of connection in the church community

While some initiatives can be tackled right away, others must be added to the budget and strategically planned. The Appendix itemizes the approved plan that will ensure we are actively working towards the goals and stated outcomes of this process. From here, the Church Council and the Finance Committee will explore implementation further, including evaluating existing financial and personnel capacity, and exploring opportunities to expand capacity to fully live into the Vision.

Appendix: Detailed Initiatives, Strategies, and Tactics

Initiative 1: Strengthen faith development and fellowship among children and youth through a robust family ministry program.

Outcomes:

- Increase student engagement in the JOY class, UMYF, and other benchmark activities.
- Increase student engagement in Children's Sunday School and other benchmark activities.
- Define a process for welcoming new people into the youth program and the children's ministry.
- Recruit and support the committed group of adults serving in the youth program and children's ministry.
- Define expectations for parent involvement throughout the family ministry program.

Strategies:

1.1 Invest significantly in the youth program.

Tactics	Responsible Party	Timeline Target
Hire a permanent full-time youth director (broad search, use a search firm if needed).	SPRC	
Establish a search committee and incorporate previously collected feedback from parents and youth into the recruitment and hiring process.	SPRC	
Establish a children and youth ministry endowment to supplement these ministries' goals and financial needs.	Finance	

1.2 Develop a vibrant and sustainable youth program, ensuring the systems and tools needed for ministry.

Tactics	Responsible Party	Timeline Target
Develop a thorough plan to rebuild youth programming: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define the JOY class goals and process • Define UMYF goals and process • Define goals for other benchmark activities (other weekly activities, beach, ASP, etc.) • Create role expectations/job descriptions for volunteers • Create a handbook and train adult volunteers • Recruit leaders who are committed for a defined time frame 	Youth Director and Pastor of Formation	
Create a Youth Discipleship Core Team consisting of adult and youth leaders.	Youth Director	
Develop and implement an annual survey to solicit feedback from youth and parents, and benchmark progress towards (quantitative and qualitative) ministry goals.	Youth Director	

1.3 Strengthen the children's ministry model and build in parent participation expectations.

Tactics	Responsible Party	Timeline Target
Conduct an audit and define the children's model based on current feedback and best practice. Consider a consultant if needed.	Director of Children's Ministry and Pastor of Formation	
Create a Children's Ministry Core Team composed of the Director of Children's Ministry and Lay Adult leaders.	Director of Children's Ministry	
Develop and implement an annual survey to solicit feedback from parents and benchmark progress towards (quantitative and qualitative) ministry goals.	Director of Children's Ministry	
Establish the expectation of parent participation.	Children's Ministry Core Team	
Create role expectations/job descriptions for volunteers.	Director of Children's Ministry	
Create a handbook and train adult volunteers.	Director of Children's Ministry and Core Team	
Recruit teachers and/or teaching teams for each Sunday School class and develop a program-wide instruction manual.	Director of Children's Ministry and Core Team	

Initiative 2: Sustain our foundation by strategically investing in capital and human resources for enduring growth and impact.

Outcomes:

- Enabling sustainable ministry through financial health.
- Deeper community engagement and greater lay leader and member involvement.

Strategies:

2.1 Make strategic investments in communication.

Tactics	Responsible Party	Timeline Target
Conduct a communication audit.	ED and Communications Director	
Invest in a new CRM to streamline communications, relationship management, and registrations.	ED and Communications Director	
Revamp website.	Communications Director	
Explore the demand for virtual/hybrid/(paper?) options and any additional tools needed to support demand.	ED and Communications Director	
Create a comprehensive template for communication activities.	Communications Director	
Develop a holistic approach to communication activities that ensures all members are aware of all church activities, rather than a siloed pathway approach.	ED and Communications Director	

2.2 Develop and train a lay leadership pipeline to increase church operations and ministry ownership.

Tactics	Responsible Party	Timeline Target
Create a committee (or include nominations) to focus on lay engagement.	Director of Membership & Lay Involvement	
Build a pipeline and member gifts and interests in the CRM.	Director of Membership	
Regularly update members' interests, life situations, and skills in CRM.	Dir. of Mem. & Lay Inv. and pastors, when they become aware of lay interests & skills	
Update committee and lay leader job descriptions, expectations, and operational protocol/handbook.	Dir. of Mem. & Lay Inv., and pastors who regularly engage a particular lay committee/group	
Develop a lay leadership pipeline with defined succession plans for each ministry.	Dir. of Mem. & Lay Inv., pastors who regularly engage a particular lay committee/group	

2.3 Build funds to ensure capital maintenance and improvements can be managed sufficiently over time.

Tactics	Responsible Party	Timeline Target
Retire debt.	Finance and PEC	
Grow an endowment/reserve fund to support capital maintenance.	Finance and PEC	

Initiative 3: Foster and cultivate a church home that makes all feel welcomed as we worship and come to the table as one community.

Outcomes:

- Ensure a “feels like home” atmosphere where you are known by name.
- Retention of current membership and increase in new members.
- Increase worship attendance and participation in church life.

Strategies:

3.1 Church Council and staff to partner in designing a welcoming atmosphere to evaluate how visitors are received at HBUMC and connected to the life of the church.

Tactics	Responsible Party	Timeline Target
Ensure “big ticket” events are invitational, encouraging membership to invite others, and providing follow-up opportunities.	Church Council	
Create an environment of hospitality for individuals from all walks of life, including middle-aged singles, the	Church Council	

Tactics	Responsible Party	Timeline Target
LGBTQ+ community, people with disabilities, and people of different races.		
Recruit volunteers to ensure coverage at all doors.	Dir. of Mem. & Lay Inv.	
Conduct training for greeters/ushers.	Dir. of Mem. & Lay Inv.	
Create an usher/greeter committee to expand the greeters and volunteer network on Sundays.	Dir. of Mem. & Lay Inv.	
Deploy a “five points of contact” engagement model.	Dir. of Mem. & Lay Inv.	

3.2 Reimagine how we welcome and receive individuals into the church.

Tactics	Responsible Party	Timeline Target
Add signage outside to increase awareness of HBUMC.	Trustees	
Reimagine the narthex/welcome center and main entry points creating the tools and materials to welcome and connect.	Trustees	
Add signage at the playground welcoming visitors.	Trustees	
Create a welcoming space externally to welcome our neighbors/walkers (ex. provide water fountains, benches, etc.).	Trustees	
Reevaluate internal signage to create clarity for visitors.	Trustees	
Name tags for groups requesting or large events.	Church Administration	
Online directory participation campaign to replace the church directory.	Church Administration	

3.3 Build support among staff and lay leadership to engage visitors and integrate new members.

Tactics	Responsible Party	Timeline Target
Ensure participation of staff and lay leaders to connect visitors and new members into the life of the church through our CRM.	Dir. of Mem. & Lay Inv.	
Invite new members to participate, teach, serve, and develop their spiritual gifts.	Dir. of Mem. & Lay Inv.	
Increase awareness of Stephen Ministers.	Pastor of Support in partnership with the Director of Comms and InCrowd Ministries. Dir.	

3.4 Ensure inclusion of seniors, homebound members, and those who require virtual options.

Tactics	Responsible Party	Timeline Target
Create a year-round engagement plan for activities for seniors (e.g., in-home communion, in-home visits, caroling, etc.).	Pastor of Visitation, InCrowd Ministry Director,	To discuss together by the end of August 2025

Tactics	Responsible Party	Timeline Target
	and Pastor of Support	
Determine how the church will engage the new retirement community.	Pastor of Support (leader) and other clergy.	[determined by end date of construction]
Assess possibilities for fellowship with aging members beyond Communion Friends and Stephen Ministers.	Pastor of Visitation, InCrowd Ministry Director, and Pastor of Support	To discuss together by the end of August 2025.

3.5 Resume/Reimagine a shuttle system to decrease parking issues.

Tactics	Responsible Party	Timeline Target
Consider a shuttle service partnership with WMPC.	Trustees	
Determine how to best support InCrowd and Starnes members.	Trustees	
Determine overflow parking options and share options.	Trustees	
Consider volunteer parking attendants to direct individuals on Sundays.	Trustees	

Initiative 4: Invite lifelong spiritual growth by developing opportunities for education, formation, and contemplation.

Outcomes:

- Every member is connected to a formation group within the church.
- Increased participation in educational and spiritual formation opportunities, led by pastors and lay leaders.
- Members grow on their spiritual journey and increase engagement with spiritual practices personally and communally.

Strategies:

4.1 Develop a spiritual formation roadmap to empower all members to live out and grow their faith across their entire lifespan.

Tactics	Responsible Party	Timeline Target
Learn from the best formation practices of other churches.	Pastor of Spiritual Formation	
Learn from members' individual faith journeys to support the development of the roadmap.	Pastor of Spiritual Formation	
Audit existing formation groups and offerings to understand active groups.	Pastor of Spiritual Formation	
Draft core competencies of what lifelong spiritual growth entails.	Pastor of Spiritual Formation	
Continually review offerings to ensure variety, interest, and deeper development.	Pastor of Spiritual Formation	
Offer special opportunities (events, retreats, or workshops) with experts.	Pastor of Spiritual Formation	

4.2 Develop and equip lay leaders to support education, formation, and contemplation.

Tactics	Responsible Party	Timeline Target
Recruit and support lay leaders who are called to teach, coordinate, and lead spiritual formation offerings.	Pastor of Spiritual Formation	Ongoing, with bi-annual check-ins
Provide regular teaching resources/workshops and spiritual nurture opportunities for the lay leadership group.	Pastor of Spiritual Formation	Bi-annual
Build systems for lay leaders and pastors to reflect on their role and receive feedback from peers and pastors.	Pastor of Spiritual Formation	
Track participation in formation and education activities.	Pastor of Spiritual Formation	

4.3 Support contemplative practices and prayer in the life of the church.

Tactics	Responsible Party	Timeline Target
Discern rhythm for contemplative offerings, including weekly/monthly gatherings, seasonal opportunities, and retreats.	Pastor of Spiritual Formation	
Collaborate with lay members who are trained to lead contemplative practices to design a plan for integrating contemplation into the life of the church.	Pastor of Spiritual Formation alongside lay leaders	

4.4 Support the growth of small groups and covenant groups with a focus on various demographics, including young adults, men in their 30s-40s, single parents, seniors, and single adults.

Tactics	Responsible Party	Timeline Target
Offer clear on-ramps in fall and winter for people to join short-term or ongoing groups based on life stage or interest. Consider aligning with sermon themes.	Pastor of Spiritual Formation	
Recruit and support leaders from each target group to help shape, lead, and invite others into small groups and covenant groups.	Pastor of Spiritual Formation	
Remove barriers to participation by exploring various small group and covenant group formats to meet the schedules/needs of specific demographics (ex, lunchtime Teams option)	Pastor of Spiritual Formation	
Provide ready-to-use resources and regular check-in support for new groups.	Pastor of Spiritual Formation	
Integrate small group participation as a clear next step for new members.	Pastor of Spiritual Formation	
Collect feedback annually to understand small group needs, meeting times, and what's working/not working for target demographics.	Pastor of Spiritual Formation	

Initiative 5: Enhance missional outreach through a relational approach that fosters dialogue and introduces diverse avenues for service.

Outcomes:

- Increased community engagement and participation in church-led initiatives
- Deeper engagement with service partnerships and growth in member involvement
- Deeper connections with diverse populations through ongoing dialogue and relationship-building efforts

Strategies:

5.1 Increase involvement and awareness of outreach opportunities.

Tactics	Responsible Party	Timeline Target
Engage creative ways to share outreach opportunities. Focus on sharing stories of impact, not just publicizing upcoming opportunities.	Communications Director, Outreach Pathway	
Quarterly or annual newsletter with stories, partner highlights, volunteer testimonials, etc., that celebrate impact	Communications Director, Outreach Pathway	
Integrate outreach into worship more often (intentionally announcing and praying over collections before they go out into the community, weaving outreach opportunities into the prayers of the people, monthly/quarterly mission moment during welcome to announce upcoming opportunities)	Outreach Pathway	

5.2 Continue to offer relational outreach opportunities with long-term commitment.

Tactics	Responsible Party	Timeline Target
Focus on repeat outreach opportunities with a small handful of organizations, rather than one-and-done or infrequent opportunities with many organizations. (This is already underway with the tiered funding structure of the outreach grant. The larger the financial commitment, the longer the volunteerism commitment.	Outreach	
Prioritize "being with" over "doing for" by partnering with organizations that foster opportunities to come alongside the people they serve. Provide information/training with best practices.	Outreach	
Encourage SS classes, covenant groups, UMW Circles, etc., to "adopt" a cause/nonprofit for 3-5 years, to build relationships and return to serve over a longer commitment period.	Outreach	

5.3 Utilize church facilities more effectively to benefit the community.

Tactics	Responsible Party	Timeline Target
Put out an all-call to community partners announcing that we would love to be as hospitable as possible with our space. Outline a clear process for requesting to use space (on short-term versus long-term bases) and create an open door for community members to ask to utilize the church.	Outreach	

Tactics	Responsible Party	Timeline Target
Put the right policies and processes in place to explore opening the church back up for short-term overnight guests through organizations like Family Promise or Welcome House.	Trustees	
Conduct an audit of our current space usage and determine windows of time that could be offered to specific community groups for their programming needs.	Trustees	

5.4 Increase dialogue, relationship, and partnership with diverse groups, churches, and organizations.

Tactics	Responsible Party	Timeline Target
Look for joint outreach projects such as Scatter to Serve, meal packings, etc.	Outreach / Pastors	

5.5 Strengthen intergenerational participation in outreach efforts.

Tactics	Responsible Party	Timeline Target
Establish intergenerational outreach teams by pairing youth, adults, and seniors for service projects, ensuring shared leadership roles, mentorship opportunities, and space for mutual learning and relationship.	Outreach and Director of Membership & Lay Involvement	

Vision Committee

Mary June Jones, Co-Chair

Matt Kirby, Co-Chair

Brad Breeding
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Carolyn Carruth
Katie Clayton
Tina Clyburn
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Helen Johnson
Garrett Pedersen
Lee Ragsdale
Charlie Russell
Allison Thompson
Patti Young



Vision Committee Co-Chair Matt Kirby presenting summary findings of the listening sessions with Armstrong McGuire consultant Mendi Nieters at a special session on February 9th, 2025.