

Thalia Lynn Baptist Church

at Town Center

The Vision

July 2019

When I opened the program to write this article, I noticed the icon looked different. Then, I opened the program and received a notice that the program needed an upgrade. So, I told it do so later and the program wouldn't work. I liked the old program. Why did they have to change it?

The answer is obvious: improvements must always be made if progress is going to be made. Change is not only inevitable; it is necessary. The lack of progress may be the reason that seemingly invulnerable companies eventually fail.

Does that mean that everything has to change? No, the core values of a company must always remain the same. Too often organizations change their core values without realizing they have done so. For example, a church can become an organization that pleases its members rather than reaches people for Christ. That erosion of values generally takes a long time. How does this happen?

A church loses its focus when it exchanges good things for the best things. Members are important. They provide the work force and the finances for the church. They can feel that they deserve privileges for their work and contributions. Often churches begin with a number of visionary young members. They seek to reach the community because that is what they set out to do. Pastoral care is not very necessary because most of them aren't in hospitals or pass away. They are a young church and the pastor and members can give special attention to the few who need it. Time passes and this church takes its focus off of reaching people and focuses on taking care of the members. The core value becomes: The squeaky wheel gets the grease. Thus, the church changes its core values without realizing it. Positive change rarely happens in these churches.

Churches whose core value is making disciples for Jesus Christ will make changes according to reaching and discipling people. The core value never changes but the methods used are constantly being improved. This is where we want to be. We want to do whatever necessary to accomplish our core values. That will always mean change. That will always mean improvement.

Change makes for more work. It means we are always learning. And while I may have been pleased with this program I am using to write this article, the change was necessary.

Prentis McGoldrick

Mega Fellowship Breakfast ~ June 7nd

Its about people. Invite a friend and come join us for the fellowship!

4392 Virginia Beach Blvd., Virginia Beach, VA 23462 • 757-499-0557 • www.ThaliaLynn.com



Please be in prayer for our kids and chaperones during camp week July 15-19

“Loose Change” Drive. \$400.00 was collected to go toward expenses for Centri-Kid. All scholarships were funded.

Thank you for your support.

Clarification:

We’ve had several inquiries into exactly what is the expectation for cleaning Fellowship Hall and Kitchen after use. Simply stated, it means that if I use the Fellowship Hall then I also am responsible for leaving it in the same condition that I got it. This would mean ensuring the floors are clean, the trash is removed, the sinks are free of dishes, things are left where they belong, etc. If I leave it in the same condition that I would expect you to leave it for me, then I have met this intent.

Worship Coordinator:

If, on Sundays you have noticed someone taking copious notes about the worship service from the rear of the Sanctuary, you have seen our new Worship Coordinator, Tony Kelly. Tony is the most recent addition to the Sunday worship team and will serve as “Worship Coordinator” for Sunday morning services. Tony will be primarily focused on identifying and calling attention to “things” that detract from the flow and quality of the worship service, and how to improve the synchronization of worship elements. Part of his responsibilities will also include conducting pre-service meetings with the respective teams from each worship service to ensure a common understanding of how worship service is planned. Welcome Tony!

Support to Mega Fellowship Sunday

Date	Class 1	Class 2
Jul 7	Grace and Truth Class	Bereans Class
Aug 4	Friendship Class	A class needed here!
Sep 1	Fishermen Class	Carpenters
Oct 6	Adults Under Construction	Fellowship Class
Nov 3	Grace and Truth	Bereans Class

The support goal for Mega Fellowship Sunday is to have a total of eight classes paired up by twos, on a four-month rotation Schedule. If your class would like to add to that rotation, let the church office now.

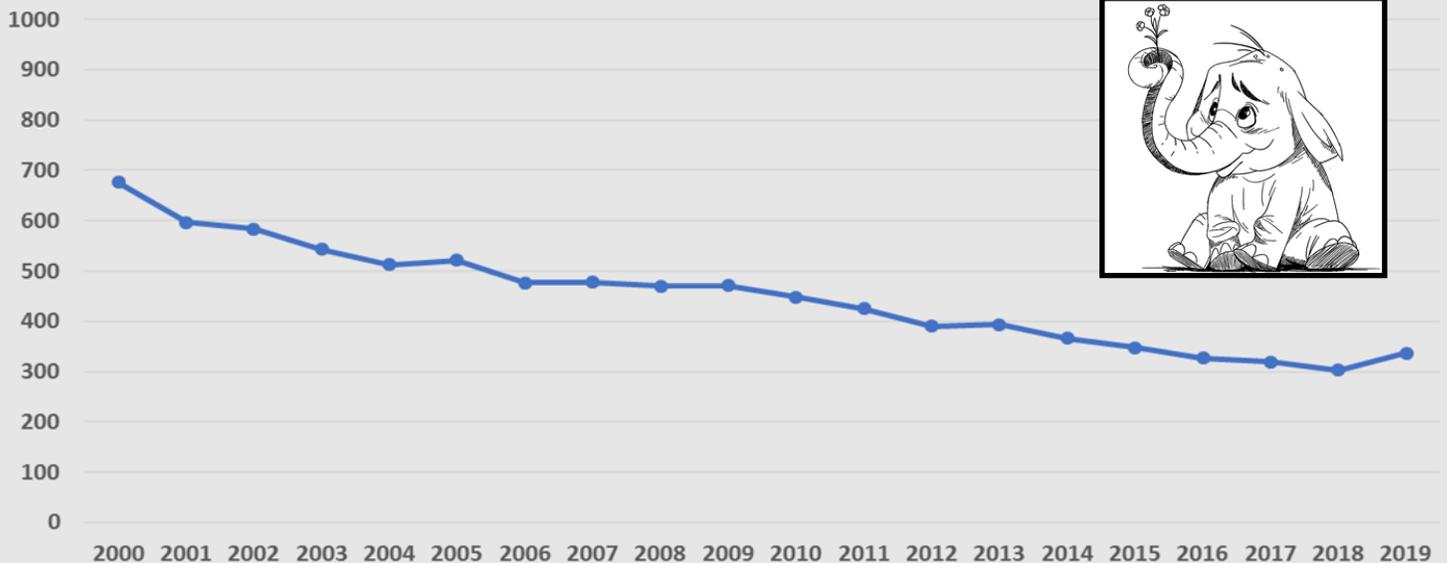
AC Thermostats Placed in Fellowship Hall and Chapel

You are very aware that we have had some room temperature control problems in both the Fellowship Hall and Chapel. Part of the problem, particularly during temperature “transition” months (Spring and Fall) is that we have dueling systems. Heat comes from one system and AC from another. Sometimes both system are running at the same time because of various factors. The real fix will be to eventually replace our AC-only units with units that are capable of providing either heat or AC, as necessary (and very expensive). In the interim, we have installed thermostats in both the Fellowship Hall and Chapel to provide at least some local control over the AC temps. Local control is restricted to 3 degrees above or below the programmed room temperature. We believe that this will help provide better temperature control. As part of this process, we also had to replace the controllers for each room with more state-of-the-art controls. The controllers installed in our system are no longer manufactured, so we will quietly replace each of the remaining 16 controllers as they fail over the next few years. Each controller replacement costs us about \$900.00, plus labor. As of this writing, two more controllers failed.



A Look at Worship Attendance Trends

Worship Trend by Yearly Average



There is a big elephant in the room: worship attendance at TLBC has declined significantly over the years. Those of us who have been around for a while have all seen it but for some reason we refuse to talk about it or admit that it might be a problem. The chart above shows worship service trends from 2000 until now — 20 years, if you consider 2019. Childcare is not included in this chart. The data is taken from records available from one or more archived sources. The data is what it is.

While I like working with numbers, I don't put a lot of stock in any *one* number. And, I could argue successfully that any of the yearly average points on the chart above is not entirely accurate. But I put a lot of credence in trend data. And the trend data over time for TLBC shows a church that has been in steady decline for the past 20 years and probably longer. In 2000, the average worship attendance was 677; in 2018 the average was 328. You do the math. Worship attendance today is about half of what it was 20 years ago. Ugh. Attendance numbers reflect of all contributing factors, good, bad, or indifferent. A barometer. A thermometer.

I've read several books that speak to turning organizations around. Many state emphatically that very few organizations (churches too) will ever turn themselves around without experiencing a huge crisis first. Some management experts even suggest that, in the absence of a *real* crisis, leadership needs to create a crisis in order to focus the attention of the organization on what needs to be changed. I agree with the first perspective but I'm not so sure about the latter. Maybe the good news is that we don't have to wait for a crisis to hit us. We are in one already and we have been in it for at least the last 20 years. We don't talk about it but there it is—the elephant, right there on our trend chart. Maybe if we ignore it and keep doing things as we have for the past twenty years, the elephant will just go away on its own. That is the definition of insanity. Trust me, the elephant is not going anywhere unless we, with God's direction and power, grow our church.

This trend line is not sustainable, particularly considering the fact that the faithful, critical mass of our membership is aging quickly. Many have aged out already and the elephant grows bigger by the day. The question for us is not necessarily how we got to this point. That is just an academic discussion that will not move us forward. The real question is what needs to change — today, while we still have the possibility of changing.

David Doyle

SAVE THE DATE:

The Lord's Supper on August 11th at 5:00 pm

In the early New Testament church, communion was observed daily followed by a communal meal with fellow Christian believers called a "love feast". Traditionally, at Thalia Lynn Baptist church our communion service is observed on a monthly basis. However, once a year we hold a special communion service on a Sunday evening along with a "love feast" called the Lord's Supper.

This special communion service and meal is held in August (a mid point between Easter and Christmas) to keep the remembrance of Christ's sacrifice for us fresh in our mind and spirit. This supper or love feast is a communal time to strengthen the bonds and the spirit of harmony, goodwill, and congeniality and to forgive past disputes and show love for one another.

We invite everyone to participate in the communion sacrament, love feast and the closing hymns. (Matthew 26:26-30). Join us on August 11th at 5 pm. Reservations are required for the meal will begin in July.

Darleen Mastin
Deacon Chair

Gains/Losses

Welcome to our newest member
Wayne Smaltz

Restroom Project Payoff

As of this writing, we only "owe" ourselves about \$3,500.00. Getting close!!! Yes!!! We will apply whatever money we receive beyond this amount towards the ongoing effort in the Youth Hall.

Mega Fellowship Sunday Schedule Sunday, July 7

- Traditional Service ~ 8:30 am
- Mega Breakfast Fellowship ~ 9:20 am
 - Sunday School ~ 10:10 am
- Contemporary Service ~ 11:10 am

Next Church Workday is Aug 24

This will be a pre-Fish Fry focus on building upkeep and cleanup. Come ready to paint and haul "stuff" to the dumpsters. Limited outside/yard work. We will need at least 15 people for this work day. Please come and lend a hand.

TLBC Hosts These Groups

Alcoholics Anonymous - Weekly on Sundays at 11:30 pm (No longer meets on Fridays)
Narcotics Anonymous - Weekly on Wednesdays at 5:30 pm
Al-Anon - Weekly on Thursdays at 12:30 pm
Multiple Myeloma Support Group - Monthly on a Saturday at 9:00 am

Publication Deadlines

Please note the following deadlines for submitting information to the church office with regards to printed publications:

Weekly Bulletin:

8:00 am on the Tuesday of the week to run

Monthly Vision and JOY Newsletter:
the 10th of the month prior

What's Happening in the Next Several Months

Jul 3: No Regular Wednesday Night activities
Jul 7: Mega Fellowship Sunday
Jul 7: Lord's Supper Sign-ups begin
Jul 14: JOY Speaker—Understanding Dementia
Jul 15 - 19: Centri-Kid
Jul 18: JOY Dinner
Jul 21 - 27: Youth Tri-Cities Camp
Jul 21: Church Council, Business Meeting,
Deacon's Meeting
Jul 29 - Aug 2: Music Camp
Aug 2: Music Camp Presentation
Aug 4 - 9: Youth Watermarks Camp
Aug 4: Mega Fellowship Sunday
Aug 11: Lord's Supper
Aug 17: Aragona Outreach
Aug 17: WINGS Movie Matinee
Aug 18: Deacon's Meeting
Aug 24: Church Work Day
Aug 25: "Who's Your One" Leadership Lunch
Aug 29: JOY Potluck/Game Day
Sep 1: Mega Fellowship Sunday
Sep 7: Community Fish Fry
Sep 9: Ballroom Dance Class - The Waltz
Sep 15: Church Council and Deacon's Meeting
Sep 19: JOY Dinner
Sep 24: JOY Trip to Washington, DC
Sep 28: Rise Against Hunger (WMU Event)

Youth Workcamp Information Sunday, July 21-27

Please be in prayer for our high school students as they travel to Petersburg, VA for Tri-Cities Workcamp.

Participants include: Steven Bell, Paul Best, Leigh Cress, David & Joshua Faircloth, Andrew Hammock, Zachary Nelson, Justin Slaughter, Fernanda Sotomayor, Samantha Stark, Ayanna & Saura Suchak, and Charis & Rena Woodall; Chaperones are: Shane & Vicky Faircloth, Bill Field, and Kristin Marriner

The mailing address for camp is:

"Participant's Name"

WORKCAMP 2019

PO Box 1761

Petersburg, VA 23805

Understanding Dementia and the Continuum of Care

Sunday, July 14 at 12:15 pm

Join us for a light lunch,
followed by information by Joan Motley
regarding dementia, healthcare options
and Medicare/Medicaid.

Please make your reservation in the
church office by July 8.

Cost for lunch will be by donation.

Building/Facility Priorities

- Restrooms - Pay off the balance
- Youth Hall - Complete renovation. There has been much progress already, thanks to many donations of time, energy, material and cash donations. (2019)
- Youth Hall - Replace windows. (Not part of the current renovation project)
- Library - Replace flooring (2019)
- Chapel - paint and replace flooring. (2019)
- Air Conditioning Units - Music Suite, Fellowship Hall, Chapel. These units are getting very old. (2019/20/21)
- AC System Controllers. No longer made for our system. As each one fails, replace failed controllers with newer technology @\$1,000.00 each! Two failed in June. We have 18.
- Fellowship Hall - Cabinetry, sound system, flooring, heat-efficient windows, etc. (2020/21)
- Entry Doors - Magnetize all main entry doors to enable a quick lock-down, in case of emergency. (2019, 2020)
- Lockdown Doors. In hallways leading to Kid's classroom areas. (2020)
- Parking Lot - Complete the installation of LED lighting. (2019) Re-treat paved area to extend its life (2020)
- Emergency Alert - Install an emergency alert system throughout church (2020)

Want to have an activity here at the church?

All activities that take place in the church building or on the church grounds must be approved through the church office. To request approval fill out a "Facilities & Activities Reservation Request Form (Purple Form)" located in the church office or on the website.

The XP Corner

We recently returned from several days at Disney World in Orlando. I was impressed. Not with the rides, costumes, or characters, but with the Disney organizational culture and focus. There were literally thousands – perhaps millions – of things going on there at the same time, in series, or in tandem and moving toward a single objective: to offer an experiential environment that the customer will never forget. There, every employee has a role and knows exactly where he/she fits in the organizational objectives. Every building, every road and path, every attraction has a reason for existing that points toward a common outcome. From the moment we stepped on campus (we stayed at one of the lodges on the Disney property) it soon became obvious that Disney World itself *was* the ride and we were the riders. And what a ride it was! I was amazed. But, mostly, I was puzzled and a bit jealous as to how an enterprise that big, that diverse, that complex could be so united around a single existential purpose — its *raison d’etre*. I discovered, as my days at the park progressed, that what might at first glance have seemed like unconnected pieces at Disney were not disparate at all. Rather, all pieces functioned/turned together with purpose, as parts in a giant “machine” made up of people, facilities, electronics, sales, etc. and intentional about where it is going.

If such a culture can take hold and thrive in a commercial enterprise like Disney (whose rewards are temporal at best) why can’t it also take hold and thrive here at Thalia Lynn Baptist Church, (where what we have is eternal). It boils down to culture. Disney knows where it is going and everything at Disney is moving in that direction. So, what about us? Is it really possible to re-create ourselves into a church that is clear about where it needs to go and where we need to take the neighbors that we touch. Yes, it is possible. But not through our own power. It will require a new TLBC culture — one that we have not ever had before. It is going to take leaving some of our very heavy baggage behind. It is going to take looking ahead and leaving our past in the past. God has already planted those seeds here. We just need to let those seeds grow.

David Doyle

Spend Awhile ON THE Nile

THE MIGHTY ANCIENT HERO CRUISE

Children’s Music Camp

July 29 - August 2 from 9:00 am - 3 pm

For children who have completed 1st - 3rd grades

Cost: \$35 per child; \$30 for each additional child

Registration forms are located in the church office.

Auditions will be July 11 and July 14. Contact the church office to schedule your audition.

In the May *Vision* issue, we looked at how the Apostle Paul used different approaches in presenting the Gospel message, depending on his audience. Jesus did the same thing throughout his earthly ministry—He consistently adjusted or changed his approach with the various folks he encountered, based on their needs, their personalities, and their backgrounds. Why? To reach them in the most effective way possible with the Gospel message, the Good News of Christ and His gift of salvation. Few would argue the general point that we, as the church, need to be doing the same thing: *adjusting or changing our approach in sharing the gospel message whenever necessary (while at the same time holding firmly to our beliefs) in order to reach a greater number of people for Christ.*

But what does this mean *specifically* speaking at Thalia Lynn? In what areas do we need to be changing our approach for the sake of the gospel? There are probably several, but three big ones that jump out at me are: our *approach to the Bible*, our *approach toward people* (especially visitors), and our *approach to terminology*. Starting this month with the Bible, I'll be sharing with you some thoughts about these three areas and how we might go about adjusting our approach to each.

Our focus as a church should always be Christ. As we grow in Christlikeness through his Spirit living in our hearts, we lead others to come to know him as Savior and Lord and to grow in the likeness of Christ as well. Being conformed to the image of Christ, then, should always be our goal, and our church's guiding vision—bringing relationships to life—embraces that whole process. Of course, the Bible plays a critical role in all of this. But, with an increasing number of adults having little or no knowledge of the truths presented in the Bible, do we, as everyday people in the church, need to make some changes in our approach to it? I think so. We certainly cannot fall back on worn out clichés like, “The Bible says it. I believe it. That settles it.” Such an approach is not effective in today's culture (I'm not sure it ever really was) because it not only cuts off conversation, it makes it sound as if one's salvation depends on what an individual believes about the Bible rather than trusting in Jesus Christ as Savior.

If our focus as a church really is Christ and our goal really is about growing more and more in his likeness (and helping others to do the same), then shouldn't our approach to the Bible be one that leads a person, *first and foremost*, to a deeper understanding of Him? Shouldn't we be devoting as much time as possible toward that part of the Bible that deals directly with Christ and what life in Him is all about? Shouldn't we be much more engaged in thoroughly learning and applying to our lives *first* what the New Testament has to say as opposed to reading through the Bible as if it were a book (which it isn't) that was comprised of equally-important chapters or sections starting, in this case, with Genesis and ending with Revelation?

Don't get me wrong. All the Bible is God's Word—no question about that—but what makes up the New Testament (more accurately translated *New Covenant*) clearly is the most important part because our very salvation and continued spiritual growth depend on the One who is its primary subject! In the pages of the New Testament are all the accounts of Jesus' life, His teachings and commandments to us, plus the writings of God-inspired disciples, apostles, leaders and missionaries of the early church. No, we shouldn't discount or stop reading the Old Testament, for its authors were just as God-inspired as those who wrote the books of the New Testament. But if our intent, if our goal, has to do with reaching more people for Christ as we all grow in our relationship with Him, our approach to the Bible needs to be one in which there is a *clear and direct path* toward the living Savior. Our approach to the Bible needs to be one in which we are very intentional about understanding (and helping others to understand) what life is all about *in the context of a growing relationship with Christ*. This means consciously devoting much more of our time and energy in reading, studying and applying the truths contained in the four gospels, Paul's letters, and other New Testament scripture. I think adjusting our approach to the Bible in this way would result in more people coming to know Christ as Savior and Lord, and more people continuing to grow in His likeness. I think, too, that the Old Testament would then take on a much deeper meaning, for it would be seen and understood in the full light of Christ as the vital part of the story of God's love for mankind that it is.

--Perry Crouch

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Your World Needs a Hero.

We are calling all men to step up and into their calling as men.

We need leaders to step forward to show them the way. We need leaders like you to take an active role in our men's ministry.

Contact Thom Owens via Realm for more details.