

## Centennial Vision:

### Embracing God's Call for the Future of SMBC

This document represents the culmination of thirteen months of prayer, reflection, and discussion in the life of SMBC. The congregation was asked for its reflections and input using the following methodology:

- 40 Days of Prayer Emphasis, January and February 2023
- Wednesday night and Sunday afternoon roundtables during the first two quarters of 2023
- Deacons meeting presentations in January, February, March, June, and October 2023; and January 2024
- Pastor Relations Committee meetings on October 11, 2023 and January 17, 2024
- Emails, text messages, and in-person conversation

Centennial Vision builds upon and draws from many years of similar effort and should be read in consultation with the Church Profile approved by St. Matthews Baptist Church (SMBC) in January 2021. The SMBC mission statement, vision statement, and core beliefs are available on the church website. Additional information about the comprehensive ministries of SMBC is available by request or will be developed in the strategies outlined below.

### From the Church Profile (2021):

Four goals/resolutions/targets

1. Enhance the caring **relationships** that are foundational to our Church family
2. Help people grow in their faith through well-defined **discipleship** efforts
3. Reach people in our community through our **ministries and mission partnerships**
4. **Attract** new families and people to our church

### From SMBC Conversations and Communication (January 2023 – January 2024):

Goal 1: Relationships

- Foster relationships for those who are new to Jesus and SMBC.
  - o Enhance communication by use of social media, website, other digital formats, emails, texts, and notes for guests and new members.
  - o Create a comprehensive Ministry List for use with newcomers.
- Ensure that Worship includes a clear evangelistic invitation and call to mission/ministry.
- Provide an array of opportunities for disciples who want to go deeper with Jesus.
  - o Promote small group gatherings for Sundays, weekdays, age groups, affinity groups, peer-based, mentoring, short-term settings, and other structures.
  - o Promote wellness and wholeness as a clear ministerial response to the loneliness epidemic
- Work group: Recreation Ministry
  - o External: Provide Clinic/workshop approach until capability to offer League reemerges.
  - o Internal: Offer Pickleball, other sports-related activities, and fun non-sports activities with a devotional and prayer.

Goal 2: Discipleship

- Maintain a Prayer emphasis, including a regular gathering, worship opportunities, and retreat settings.
- Expand offerings via Technology, using updated online tools for communication and connection, including a new church directory and asset map.
- Work group: integrate “wisdom” of generations
  - o Carefully combine members and guests for meal settings, intergenerational groupings, and mentoring.

Goal 3: Ministries and mission partnerships

- Enhance relationships with On-site partners, including St Matthews Baptist Weekday Preschool/PDO and St Matthews Pastoral Counseling Center.
- Identify and collaborate with Off-site partners.
- Provide ongoing Mission presence through regular year-round opportunities.
- Provide short-term Mission presence through annual and one-time special events.
- Work group: Race relations/repair/justice/reconciliation
  - o Invest in leader-to-leader and member-to-member Relationships.
  - o Identify existing and potential partners with whom to identify approaches and schedule specific events/opportunities.

- Care:
  - o Offer Benevolence that meets practical needs (like year-round capability for the kinds of projects we perform on Love 40207).

#### Goal 4: Attract

- Work group: language and symbols
  - o External: Develop Advertising with designs and materials reflecting SMBC values.
  - o External: Develop Marketing that communicates our values clearly and concisely, including:
    - Commitment to the Gospel, devotion to Jesus, priority of Christian relationships, high view of scripture, being on mission with God
    - Meaningful connection/community/relationship/small groups, inclusivity, affirmation of women, commitments on racial repair
  - o Internal: Maintain an ongoing, specific, targeted emphasis on making room for newcomers.
  - o Consider implications from round table discussions in which almost all respondents referenced favorite symbols from interior architecture, mostly windows and/or images on windows.
- Neighborliness (Formal)
  - o Initiate communication and opportunities to bless neighbors, such as teacher outreach, coffee at VBS, ice cream in parking lot, and information about on-site ministry partners.
  - o Offer space for groups and others who simply need a place to meet, both rental and free, as appropriate.
- Neighborliness (Informal)
  - o Create a receptive setting for neighbors who choose to make use of our facility and grounds, such as cycling (Louisville Wheelmen), Christian Academy bus stop, and households playing, resting, and fellowshiping on SMBC property.
- Widen the Front Door
  - o Provide a consistent, sincere, welcoming, and safe Sunday morning experience filled with inspiring worship, warm fellowship, relational discipleship, and a call to ongoing missional service
  - o Promote the opportunity for connection, relationship, community, and small groups as a clear response to loneliness epidemic
  - o Enhance current common pathways for connection:
    - St Matthews Baptist Weekday Preschool, VBS, Parking Lot and Facility, St Matthews Elementary
  - o Maintain classic pathways cited by longtime members:
    - Children's ministry, youth ministry, Preschool, Parents Day Out, ministry-related professionals, recreation, VBS
  - o Enhance follow-up with scheduled rentals/guests on SMBC property

#### Overarching Tasks:

1. Workgroup: Signature Events that pull many/all four goals together (VBS, July 4<sup>th</sup> 5K, Love 40207, Christmas Connection, Bob Downs Golf Classic)
  - a. Promote these events with consistency and a goal of relationship building.
  - b. Provide continuity of planning and communication between events and among sponsors/partners.
  - c. Enhance follow-up with registrants and participants.
2. Develop a Maintenance and Improvement Guide for facility care (including carpet, adult discipleship areas, and expanded signage consistent with previous efforts) through partnership with Finance, Building and Grounds, and related staff.
3. Tell our story more visibly and effectively in the community.
4. Assess progress toward the goals and culture outlined in this document via quarterly Administrative Council gatherings, twice annual Deacon conversations, and reports in regular Business Meetings.

#### Opportunities:

1. Gain momentum toward upcoming SMBC Centennial.
  - a. Formulate a Planning and Steering Committee to begin work (2024)
  - b. Celebrate Initial Revival in St. Matthews area (2026).
  - c. Celebrate Founding and coincide with major outreach campaign (2027).
2. Embrace the blessing of location, location, location.
  - a. Walkable neighborhood
  - b. Proximity to Seneca Park and local library
  - c. Shelbyville Rd. and Breckenridge Ln. business district
  - d. Proximity to I-64 and Bowman Field
3. Build upon foundation of an outstanding community reputation with non-Baptists, progressive-leaning moderate Baptists, and conservative-meaning moderate Baptists.