



BLAWENBURG REFORMED CHURCH

In Service to the Risen Christ since 1832

Vision Team Visits and Questionnaire

July 26, 2024

The work of the Vision Team so far:

The Vision Team has been discerning what is next for BRC. Some on the team believe BRC needs to launch a new round of energetic activity to revitalize the church. Others are skeptical that we have the resources to do new things and bring about revitalization.

One avenue we pursued was to try to answer the question, “Do we have what it takes?” The Finance Team was asked to consider a special stewardship push, and the Elders were tasked with identifying people in the congregation who could be tapped for more engagement.

The Finance Team’s response was to say that they believe that the congregation does NOT have too much more to give. The Elders did not identify anyone who could be pressed further into service, but rather identified several people who are over committed. Some of the members of the Vision Team were skeptical of the conclusions of the Board of Elders and Finance Team.

In addition to seeking input from the Elders and Finance Team, we asked the congregation for input through two means. We had “listening sessions” and we handed out a survey following a presentation in the spring. After our first two rounds of gathering input from the congregation a few things seem clear:

1. People have a lot of ideas for things our church *could do*. This includes ideas for new programs, new fundraising ideas, new ways to worship, new outreach ideas, etc.
2. The majority of those who responded to the survey want to see the church engage in either Energetic Revitalization or Radical Reinvention, rather than reducing costs and coasting or making plans to close.

Among many in the congregation, there is a desire to see more vitality and new ministries happening at BRC. What we still need to know is how our congregation will be able to support more and new programs and ministries.

Why this new round of interviews and surveys?

This round of discernment will hopefully help us answer the question “Can our congregation support more and new programs aimed at revitalization?” by asking the members of our church to tell us how they were involved in supporting the church during the past year, and how they believe they will be able to be involved in supporting the church in the coming year(s).

We are currently having a hard time keeping our established teams and ministries running with our level of people, energy, and resources. Do we have more energy to give for revitalization? We will be asking, “You have said that you want to see the church try harder and do more. How will YOU be contributing to that work? Will you be showing up? Will you be reaching out? Will you be giving more of your time, energy, and financial resources to help make this change happen?”

The information we receive should help us make a recommendation to the Consistory. If we find that people:

1. ARE planning to give more time, energy, and money, then we can recommend launching new things.
2. are skeptical that they can give and show up more, OR that they are likely to be LESS involved, then we should reconsider trying to launch new things as we are struggling to support our current levels of ministry as it is.

We hope that all our church members will accept an invitation to meet individually with a pair of members from the Vision Team and fill out a new questionnaire. Both the meetings and the questionnaire will help us in our processes of faithfully discerning our path forward as a church. Members of the Vision Team will be reaching out to you in the next few days to schedule a time when we can meet with you. We would like to complete these visits by September 1.

In God’s Peace,

The Vision Team

Dave Cochran
Elmi Hill
Pastor Jeff Knol
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