Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of North Carolina

2007-2008 Strategic Plan

Affirmed by the Ministry Councils and Adopted by the Coordinating Council on February 1, 2007

Introduction
Throughout the history of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of North Carolina (“CBFNC”), we have sought to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit in formulating ministry plans that enable us to be “good stewards of God’s varied grace.” We realize that the body of Christ is bigger than our fellowship, but we have a significant role to play in God’s mission in the world. We are called to engage in important ministries that are consistent with our corporate gifts and assets and to approach them with excellence. Our ministry plans are based on the “building blocks” of shared identity, mission, principles and values, which were established as a result of our first strategic plan, developed in 1998. They fall under several key ministry areas, which were formalized through our second strategic plan, developed in 2001. Our third strategic plan, adopted in 2004, led us to sharpen the focus of our fellowship on six “directional points:”

- Being the Presence of Christ: The Missional Church
- Building Our Fellowship
- Communicating Effectively
- Connecting Our People and Our Churches
- Enriching Our Fellowship Through Prayer
- Reaching Out to Next Generations

The 2007-2008 Strategic Plan (“Plan”) builds on previous planning efforts and includes two important additions: a “Ministry Plan” for our next fiscal-ministry year (April 2007-March 2008) and some longer term “Initiatives Shaping Future Ministries” that we will begin addressing next year. The initiatives will require more specific thinking and planning as we move into the future.

The process for developing this Plan involved several key components. Dave Odom, President of the Center for Congregational Health, served as our consultant and guided the process at every step along the way. The process was based on the assumptions that CBFNC is in a growth mode regarding ministries and support of congregations, and that congregations have high expectations of CBFNC as a primary mission and resource partner in the coming years. Since CBFNC had recently adopted a new council organizational structure, it was determined that the planning process would seek to capitalize on this structure. The centerpiece of the process consisted of four day-long “planning summits” in August and September that focused on the four general ministry areas coordinated by the various councils. Participants in these summits were the elected leaders of the councils plus other ministers and church leaders who had expertise or interest in these areas. The data from these summits were compiled by a team of staff and officers who developed a draft of the Plan. The Plan was presented to a gathering of the four councils in November for feedback and refinement, was ultimately affirmed by the Ministry Councils in January 2007, and was officially adopted by the Coordinating Council on February 1, 2007.

Our Identity
We are a fellowship of Baptists in North Carolina sharing a commitment to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, preserving historic Baptist freedoms, and calling out God’s gifts in Christians and churches to engage in Christ-centered ministry in our state and around the world.

Our Mission
Bringing Baptists of North Carolina together for Christ-centered ministry.
Our Principles

- **Centrality and Authority of Scripture**
  We affirm the authority of scripture. We believe the Bible, under the Lordship of Christ, is central in the life of the individual and church.

- **Priesthood of All Believers**
  We affirm the freedom and right of every Christian to interpret and apply scripture under the leadership of the Holy Spirit. We affirm the freedom and responsibility of every person to relate directly to God without the imposition of creed, the control of clergy, or the interference of government.

- **Autonomy of the Local Church**
  We affirm that Baptist churches are free, under the Lordship of Christ and guidance of the Holy Spirit, to determine their membership and leadership, to order their worship and work, to ordain whomever they perceive as gifted for ministry, and to participate, as they deem appropriate in the larger Body of Christ.

- **Freedom of Religion**
  We affirm religious freedom for all people and the separation of church and state.

Our Values

- **Lordship of Christ**
  We are bound together under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. He is the center of all that we think, say, and do, and is our authority for faith and practice. By "taking the form of a servant," (Philippians 2:7) Jesus Christ is our model for leadership, ministry, and service. In our obedience to the will of God, the love of Jesus shall be reflected in our relationships, fellowship, and witness.

- **Spiritual Formation**
  We are bound together in the practice of prayer and other spiritual disciplines. By nurturing life in the Spirit and being empowered by the Spirit, we will strengthen our relationship with God and our relationships with one another. We shall draw upon the breadth and depth of the Christian tradition to undergird every facet of our ministry.

- **Global Missions**
  We are bound together by a passion to fulfill the Great Commission in our communities and throughout the world. Our strategy is to do global missions in a world without borders.

Our Ministry Areas

- **Faith Development**
  Provide resources and events for spiritual formation, discipleship development and Christian fellowship.

- **Leadership Development**
  Provide resources for discovering, nurturing and sustaining current and future ministerial staff leaders.

- **Missions**
  Help Christians and Churches share the Gospel of Jesus Christ by engaging in holistic missions and ministries in their local communities, in North Carolina and around the world.

- **Fellowship Development**
  Strengthen the bonds that tie us together in fellowship and ministry through communications, gatherings, partner relationships, personnel, finances and other resources.
2007-2008 Ministry Plan

(On-going ministries are listed first. New ministries are listed in italic type.)

**Faith Development**
The Faith Development Ministry Council provides leadership in this area.

- Plan, promote and conduct a Children’s Choir Festival.
- Plan, promote and conduct Children’s Day Camps.
- Plan, promote and conduct College Ministry Discussions.
- Plan, promote and conduct Companions in Christ Training.
- Plan, promote and conduct Congregational Leadership Events.
- Plan, promote and conduct a Marriage Enrichment Retreat.
- Plan, promote and conduct a Singles Retreat.
- Plan, promote and conduct a Youth Choir Festival.
- Plan, promote and conduct Youth Retreats in the spring, fall and winter.
- Plan, promote and conduct a Youth Day at Emerald Point Water Park (summer).
- *Conduct or provide a 5-day Spiritual Formation Academy for Adults.*
- *Develop a strategy to help youth (teenagers) to understand CBF/CBFNC.*

**Leadership Development**
The Leadership Development Ministry Council provides leadership in this area.

- Provide scholarships for in-state divinity school students.
- Select recipients for out-of-state scholarships.
- Provide financial support for the nurture and support of CBF divinity school students.
- Host bi-annual meetings with the Deans of NC Divinity Schools to promote regular communication, discuss scholarship and funding issues, and explore developing other joint ministries.
- Provide funding for college ministry interns.
- Plan and support an annual Youth Minister’s Retreat.
- Provide financial support for the Young Leaders Program.
- *Establish a regional network of Chaplains and Pastoral Counselors.*
- *Develop an assertive and formalized ministry to: create a support-and-nurture network for men and women seminary/divinity students; create a follow-up system to track current and graduated scholarship recipients; connect students to CBFNC supportive ministers and congregations; promote internships; and involve students in CBFNC events*
**Missions**
The Missions Ministry Council provides leadership in this area.

- Provide missional church training and consultation.
- Resource local churches interested in partnering together to plant new churches; meet with prospective new church planters and pre-qualify them for congregational consideration (resume, references, background check, testing, interview, etc.).
- Assist churches and individuals in engaging in mission and ministry opportunities throughout our state, nation and world.
- Develop a disaster response plan and coordinate disaster response efforts with CBF National and state bodies and other partners that will enable churches to be the presence of Christ when a crisis or natural disaster brings loss to a community.
- Coordinate the partnership with Village of Hope in the Ukraine; assist churches in praying, giving and going; and prepare a 3-year covenant partnership agreement with Ukrainian Baptists.
- Coordinate the partnership with the Belize Baptist Association, including the Baptist Bible School of Belize; assist churches in praying, giving and going; and prepare a 3-year covenant partnership agreement with the Belize Baptist Association.
- *Hold a family weekend missions experience in fall 2007 in North Central North Carolina in partnership with area churches.*
- *Host an Emerging Church conference.*

**Cultivating the Fellowship**
The Coordinating Council provides leadership in this area.

- Plan and conduct the annual state General Assembly.
- Plan and conduct a fall gathering.
- Plan and conduct the state meeting at the CBF National General Assembly.
- Promote the growth of regional fellowship groups.
- Communicate CBFNC ministries with individuals, churches and partners.
- Administer personnel growth and development.
- Plan annual budget and secure financial support for ministries.
- Promote support for historic NC Baptist ministries through *Mission Resource Plan.*
- *Employ a part-time Coordinator to lead reference and referral ministry, serve as staff liaison to Leadership Development Council, and explore establishing an interim ministry network and ministry to ministers in transition.*
- *Lead effort in cooperation with Endowment Management Board and Leadership Development Ministry Council to establish and promote an endowment fund for theological education scholarships.*
Initiatives Shaping Future Ministries

Diversity

Need – CBF Christians and churches value ethnic, generational and gender diversity in our fellowship. Unfortunately, we are almost exclusively Anglo, women are still under-represented in leadership, especially pastoral leadership, and most adults who are active in our fellowship are middle aged and older.

Action – The Coordinating Council will appoint a task force to make recommendations for increasing the diversity of our fellowship.

General Assembly and Fall Fellowship

Need – Our annual General Assembly draws increasing numbers of people every year. We have outgrown most local church venues. As we grow, our supporters are requesting more time together for worship, training and fellowship. The Fall Fellowship is encountering similar limits.

Action – The Coordinating Council and the General Assembly Committee will study the ongoing needs of the General Assembly and plan for the growth of this meeting as well as our fall gathering.

Resource Missional Congregations

Need – Congregations look increasingly to CBFNC to provide resources. CBFNC, along with the larger CBF movement, is committed to encouraging congregations to be missional, rather than merely programmatic and CBFNC would like to be a model of this new paradigm.

Action – The Coordinating Council, in concert with the Ministry Councils, will convene a “think tank” of leaders and strategic thinkers to develop a model that will enable our fellowship to resource congregations to be missional while also being good stewards of the financial and human resources that are entrusted to us.

College Ministry

Need – College ministry has been an important focus for decades for many individuals and churches in our fellowship. Our primary approach to college ministry in the past has been campus-based. New approaches are needed to address the changing context of college students and the way churches relate to them.

Action – The Coordinating Council will contract with an experienced college minister to work with the Faith Development Ministry Council as a resource to CBFNC congregations in developing church-based college ministries.

Evangelism

Need – The individuals and churches within our fellowship believe in evangelism and feel called to share the Good News of God’s love in Jesus Christ in our communities and around the world. Some methods of evangelism no longer seem to be effective in reaching our neighbors and other methods are not consistent with who we are and what we believe.

Action – The Faith Development Ministry Council will appoint a task force to explore evangelism needs, to develop a healthy philosophy/theology for evangelism; to develop a
strategy for congregational evangelism; and to explore the relationship between being a missional church and evangelism.

North Carolina Missions

Need – CBF individuals and churches in North Carolina are very involved in missions outside our state. Many feel called to cooperate together through CBFNC to become more involved in missions within North Carolina, including but not limited to ministries modeled after CBF’s Together for Hope (rural poverty).

Action – The Missions Council will explore opportunities to partner with congregations around the state to develop North Carolina mission ministries.

Hispanic Ministry

Need – The Hispanic population in North Carolina is growing at a phenomenal rate. In fact, it is the fastest growing ethnic group in our state. We also want to encourage the establishment of new ethnic congregations and partnerships with established ethnic churches and organizations.

Action – The Missions Council will create a Hispanic Ministries task force to develop a plan for relating to existing Hispanic pastors and congregations and launching new ministries with this population.

Annual Planning Process

Need – Throughout our thirteen-year history, CBFNC has valued strategic planning. Typically, we have engaged in a comprehensive strategic planning process every three years. Annual operational planning has been primarily limited to developing the annual budget. We are now faced with an environment in which our context is changing very rapidly. Projecting three years is extremely difficult. At the same time, our ministries are growing so quickly that more intentional annual operational planning is required.

Action – The Coordinating Council will develop a new planning process that gives more emphasis to annual operational planning.

Foundational Beliefs

Need - Early in our history, CBFNC developed a set of foundational principles, including identity, mission, principles, virtues, values, and method. As a natural function of our growth, development and maturity, we need to re-visit these foundational beliefs and determine if they should be re-affirmed, updated, or changed.

Action – The Coordinating council will create a task force to examine our foundational belief statements and make recommendations on what changes, if any, need to be made, and how to communicate them within and beyond our fellowship.

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Helping to Shape the Future of CBFNC

If you would be willing to serve on a task force or team related to any of the above areas, please send an email with your contact information and area(s) of interest, to CBFNC Office Manager Nancy Parks (NParks@cbfnc.org), who will forward your name to the appropriate staff member or Council.