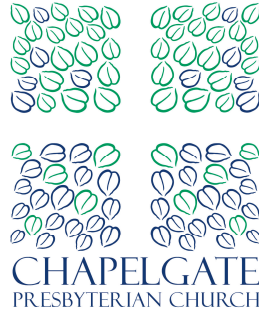


CHAPELGATE
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



April 20, 2006

To: The Session & Chairman of the Deacons
From: Mike Khandjian

Dear Brothers,

We have been together for roughly three-and-a-half months and already there is much for us to discuss and decide as we move forward in a very exciting and promising environment. During the course of this paper I will lay out the directions I believe we should seriously consider, and will offer observations along the way.

There is much that is out there before us – it is exciting to consider – the possibilities and the potential – it thrills me to think about what we will see as we serve together through the years. And it is an honor to serve with you all.

And what an honor to serve Christ for the sake of the Kingdom of God. I can't think of any greater and more humbling calling. We are given the privilege of doing the work of the Kingdom – incredible.

As you will find throughout the paper, while it represents change, it is really about Vision. You as a Session (and I have included Pete Pittroff, our Chairman of the Deacons in this), and ultimately the entire Congregation will need to assess as to whether this is for Chapelgate. There is an ethos here at Chapelgate that has endured through the years. And there is a core community here that has endured as well. In some ways change will be painful, but I believe necessary.

This paper will ask you to consider some redefining here at Chapelgate – to color outside the lines and stretch the limits of what we do for the sake of reaching the City, the Culture and the Nations for Jesus.

One thing you will notice is that Chapelgate Christian Academy at great length here. Other than a few comments it is generally addressed (with recommendations) on page 8.

I beg that you pray earnestly as you read through the paper, as there is much to consider.

May God Bless You as you work through this offering.

Warmly in Christ,

Mike Khandjian

Index of Sections

- Page 4 – Actions Index, Timeline for Presentation of Vision
- Pages 5-6 – A Short History to the Present
- Pages 7-14 – Observations on Strengths and Needs at Chapelgate
- Pages 15-33 – A Presentation of Identity for Chapelgate
- Pages 34-36 – Explanation of New Logo and Vision Statement
- Pages 37-41 – Core Values to be Considered
- Pages 42-50 – Staff Issues
- Pages 51-53 – Church Plant Issues
- Page 54 – Conclusion
- Pages 55-57 – Addendums

Actions Index

- Page 2 – Pray
- Page 13 – Determine and Commit to the Mission and Mission Statement
- Pages 16-17 – Diaconate Structure
- Pages 21-23 – Worship Issues
- Page 25 – Adult Ed
- Page 26 – Shift the New Member’s Class
- Page 28 – Formation of Session-Diaconate Ministry Development Team
- Pages 28-29 – Commitment to Church Planting and Formation of Church Planting Team
- Page 29 – Form a Seminary or Align with a Current Institution
- Pages 30-32 – Commitment to Engage the Culture
- Pages 34-35 – Accept new Logo
- Page 36 – New Vision Statement
- Pages 37-41 – Adoption of Core Values
- Page 42 – Reclassification of Staff
- Page 42 – Internships
- Pages 42-50 – Reassignments & New/Future Staff
- Page 49-50 – Counseling Ministry
- Pages 51-52 – New Construction
- Page 52 – Formation of Building Committee
- Page 52 – Improvements in Lobby
- Page 53 – Missional Commitments in Building Endeavors
- Page 55 – Formation of the Office of Deaconess at Chapelgate
- Pages 56-57 – Reorganization of the Elders

Timeline for Presentation of the Vision to the Chapelgate Community

- June – August – Discussion & Adoption of Vision
- September – Officers’ Retreat
- September – Two Church dinners where we will share the Vision
- November – Short Sermon Series on the Vision – Prayer & Fasting

From Recent History to the Present Day

From what I have gleaned, Chapelgate had quite a ‘hey day,’ and until not too many years ago, was what might be considered to be a thriving church. In the past four or five years we have lost many people – particularly Young Families and Young Adults. This does not include the normal attrition of people who have moved because of changing job status or retirement.

In a large church such as Chapelgate this can be an interesting thing. The church can literally ‘afford’ to die slowly. A few years ago Dan Iverson spoke with you regarding the church in Miami that his Grandfather pastored (Shenandoah Presbyterian Church) – it was one of the largest in the City (of any denomination), but it is now dead. The community changed and the culture changed, but the church did not – and it died.

My observation is that Chapelgate has some changes it has to make in order to protect against this.

Over the past few years a kind of inertia has subtly crept into this fellowship. Vision has been replaced by survival, and while the shepherding functions of the leadership have remained faithful, the Visionary work of the church has been obscured by a whole host of issues that generally don’t become issues unless the church stands still. Process has replaced Power. Efficiency has precluded Effectiveness and Excellence.

In going through some of the historical papers it is obvious that throughout the seventies and eighties Chapelgate was a cutting edge church in the area. Young Families flocked to Chapelgate. The Youth Ministry was large. The Music ministry boasted a huge Choir and program. And ‘program’ is the operative word here – during this period ‘program-driven’ churches did well.

The problem is that whenever inertia sets in over a period of time (years), the temptation for that church is to revert to the way things ‘worked’ years before. This rarely works, because what the church needs is a fresh Vision. Vision is often driven by ‘the day,’ not ‘yesterday.’ Much of Dan Iverson’s (Dan Iverson Sr.) Vision was due to events of ‘the day.’ He went to Miami with a burden for a City torn to pieces by the ‘Great Miami Hurricane’ of 1926. God blessed as Iverson built a ministry that served in ‘the day.’ Years later a massive fire gutted the church. God used this event as an opportunity for great Renewal at the church and as a great testimony in the community. **The message remained the same but the vehicle was determined largely by the immediate culture and needs of the day.**

We see this in nature. Forests burn to the ground as God uses these fires to replenish the land with fresh growth.

All this to say that God has brought us together to lead the Chapelgate Presbyterian Church in a fresh Vision. It involves some simple and subtle changes – and some big ones.

As I wrote earlier, the church, in my opinion, is in an important place – at a crossroads of sorts.

To be sure, a ‘program-driven church’ is not going to be the lead ‘gatherer’ in a community such as this one. Such a church would only attract ‘churched’ people but it would not attract the community at large. Lost people are looking for authenticity, and this means that all the unnatural barriers that churches historically put between themselves and the culture need to come crashing down. ‘Slickness’ and ‘polish’ don’t speak the Gospel to the culture any more – lives are too messy and real. People don’t want a show – they want their needs met and their hearts healed. Their lives are very real and more and more they don’t want to pretend this isn’t so.

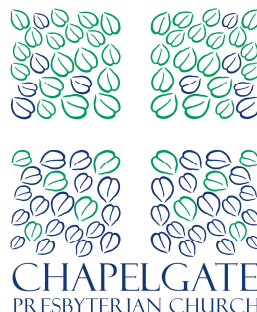
In a community such as this there is plenty of skepticism and all kinds of resistance to ‘church as usual.’

One other crucial consideration:

I believe that Chapelgate is a church (representative of other such churches) that is at a crucial generational crossroads. It is at a historic moment in that a generation of people who were formative in the development of this ministry are being met by the future of what and who this church will be. There is an overlap in generational views of ‘church’ and ‘worship’ that cannot be ignored.

This means that there are some things that we may need to do ‘today’ that will not be a part of what we do ‘tomorrow.’ We have to honor this crossroads if we are going to minister faithfully now while preparing for the future. This will figure big into this paper, particularly when it comes to worship. I have come to realize that this is more than an issue of preferences or worship wars – it is a matter of historic importance in this church’s story – and how we handle it is more important than what we actually do in the particulars – for all people involved as well as for the wellbeing of the church as a whole.

With that said, let’s dive in.



Observations:

Where are we strong at Chapelgate?

It is obvious that Chapelgate is and has been a wonderful church community. God has blessed this fellowship through the years (really, the generations) – I see much love and sweetness in the body of Christ at Chapelgate.

- Chapelgate is strong in its Infrastructure. The Elders have done a great job of structuring the church in a healthy biblical way. The Judicial Committee is amazing and I only wish that more of our churches had such a loving vehicle of church discipline. The Deacons' Benevolence Committee is a wonderful group that does a great job with a vital ministry. In other words, the infrastructure is there. It makes it possible for any ministry run smoothly and powerfully. From what I have observed the Committees are focused in their purposes yet sensitive to the need to be flexible in their deliberations. The meetings are not excruciatingly long, which is good.
- Chapelgate is Doctrinally Sound. It has carefully protected the purity of Christian Doctrine through the years. I am impressed with the understanding of the Faith by the general population of the Chapelgate church community.
- Chapelgate Practices Biblical Community. I love this Community at Chapelgate – you need to know that it amazes me. There is a strong Acts 2:42-47 sense to this church – you all share the life of faith with one another beautifully. Katherine, the girls and I have been blessed here already – just by watching you practice Christian Charity among one another. A good example of this is the Men's MUG Groups. These guys are really opening up with one another – and they are ministering to one another.
- Many people are involved in the ministry. It is wonderful to see the involvement of our Membership on many levels – this is obvious from the activity that continues to fill the church from Monday through Saturday, as well as on Sunday.
- The church has made some inroads to some important but oft-neglected ministries – such as with Celebrate Recovery, Habitat for Humanity and New Horizons and Prison Ministry (particularly the women).
- This is a Praying church – I have seen such wonderful examples of prayer at Chapelgate – more than I have witnessed or experienced in any church. The Leaders are praying Leaders. The Staff is a praying Staff. This is a praying church – I praise God.
- Women in the Church – Our Women have a deep yearning (and put it into practice) to be outwardly faced in this mission they have. I am utterly impressed with the WIC at Chapelgate.

- M.U.G. Groups – Our Men have a good system of accountability and fellowship in these groups. My only hope is that they will grow and their import will continue to yield fruit at Chapelgate.
- Missions – We have a strong Missions Ministry and, perhaps more important, a strong Missions heritage at Chapelgate. This paper will recommend some shifts in our thinking as regards the Christian Mission – but it cannot be overlooked that this has been a fine ministry.
- Chapelgate Christian Academy – God has obviously blessed this school and this is to be celebrated by us as a Leadership and as a church. I have had the privilege of observing it from a distance, both through our daughters and just as a weekly bystander. I think there is much that the Academy is and can be. However, beginning at the point of acknowledging the school as a strength, here are a few thoughts:
 - We need to better integrate this church’s Mission and Core Values into the heart of the Academy.
 - We need to revisit the Vision of the Academy and be sure that it aligns with that of the church. This is not a criticism of the Academy or the Board – it is simply that it is a fresh day at Chapelgate and we all need to revisit who we are and what we are doing here!
 - We need to figure out how to better celebrate the Academy as a church without disenfranchising Members whose Children go to other institutions.
 - We need to figure out why so few of our families send their Children to the Academy.
 - We need to figure out how to best integrate future building plans for both the church and the Academy.

What are the Needs at Chapelgate?

- An Observable Love for Those Outside the Church

“We cannot create a heaven inside and leave a hell outside, and expect to survive.”

Clement Attlee, quoted in Carpe Manana by Leonard Sweet

My observation of Chapelgate is that it has largely become an ‘insider’s’ church. Most of its growth has been through transfers. Much of its language is ‘Christian-ese’ – it isn’t easily discernable to those who don’t know Christ, or Presbyterianism. The largest adult Sunday School Class is on the Westminster standards – this is not to diminish the class but to press the point that we are good with ‘insiders’ but not those who don’t speak the ‘language.’ Such classes announce that **you have to ‘fit in’** already in order to feel part of the family. Our Vacation Bible School has historically been only for Chapelgate people’s children, so there is no outreach through VBS. The Easter Egg Hunt could easily be offered to the surrounding community (which is filled with young families) but it is only offered to our church. Our musical offerings are all sacred and rarely something the unsaved or younger Christian communities would be drawn to. Most of the committees are ‘insider’ church committees. There is little activity that deals with outreach and the lost. There is minimal concern for the surrounding culture in spite of the fact that 90% of our community is unchurched. Infighting is a natural byproduct of a more introverted structure, committee-wise. The scope is narrow and so people end up fighting over minor internal matters rather than wrestling through the mission of the church! Much of the music appeals to ‘churched’ people or people who have been here for a long time. The printed materials are adequate but not professional – they don’t do ‘their own kind of outreach,’ if that makes sense. The web site is ‘churchy’ and information-heavy.

By and large, **we have been great with our Membership but we haven’t been good with our Mission Field.** In fact those ‘shining lights’ tend to be exceptions as it is not yet in our ‘DNA’ for each Member to be involved in some ministry that takes them outside the comforts of this community.

Part of this has to do with our understanding of the mission of the Church. This has impacted how we worship, how we do Missions and how we look at the world around us.

Along with existing as a gathering body, I would add that the Church is to be a redemptive presence in the community and culture (more of this later). In other words, our love for the lost should not preclude our commitment to participate in God’s work of applying the presence of the Gospel in the Community – even if no one believes. This is our calling in the immediate community, the Baltimore area as well as throughout the world. Yet we continue to appear to be an ‘insider’ church. **We have a sense of ‘protecting the elect’ rather than harvesting them.** While much of what we do is absolutely necessary and on point the fact is that there is very little that we do that is in

keeping with our calling *outside of ourselves*. Put another way, our very solid foundational ministries are not translating into ‘outward face’ activities on the parts of our Members.

Jack Miller says it this way in Outgrowing the Ingrown Church:

“The local church was intended by Jesus to be a gathering of people full of faith – strong in their confidence in Him – not a gathering of religious folk who desperately need reassurance. Perhaps seeking personal comfort is not wrong in itself. But it is desperately wrong when it becomes the primary reason for the existence of the local church. When that happens, the local church is no living fellowship at all, but a retreat center where anxious people draw resources that enable them merely to cope with the pains of life. The church then becomes a religious cushion.”

Page 20

Writes Conn:

“The message of the Gospels is that we no longer look for the reign of God through a telescope. We open our eyes to see it directly. What we see is Jesus and the firstfruits of the final harvest day. We see the church witnessing to the kingdom come in Christ and coming in Christ; it is a news reporter for the kingdom. But we also see the church as an instrument of the kingdom and as part of the good news of the kingdom.”

Evangelism: Doing Justice and Preaching Grace, p. 18

This takes us deeper. We are called to share in God’s Redemptive work in the world. To believe Jesus when He prays, ‘Thy Kingdom come...’ is to believe that the Kingdom of God is brought into the cultural arena by believers and churches that have tasted of it and desire for Christ to be known in their areas, believing that God somehow pours Grace into that area – Grace past individuals and into communities.

The Sandtown work is a wonderful example of this. Where there was no Reformed witness there is now the Newsong Community Church. With that comes the Habitat for Humanity center, the Newsong school system and the Prison rehab ministry. This is not to overlook the future developments that are being considered, including affordable housing. This is the work of the Gospel.

Ezekiel 47:9 – “...where the river flows everything will live.”

Cornelius Plantinga, Jr. puts it well in his book, Enjoying God’s World:

“On the one hand we need to avoid triumphalism, the prideful view that we Christians will fully succeed in transforming all or much of culture... On the other hand, we also need to avoid the despairing tendency to write the world off, to abandon it as a lost cause, and to remove ourselves to an island of like-minded Christians. The word, after all, belongs to God and is in the process of being redeemed by God. ‘God so loved the world that he gave his only Son... in order that the world might be saved through him’ (John 3:26-17). Indeed, God’s plan is to gather up *all things* in Christ. How bizarre it would be for Christians to turn their backs on this plan. How ungrateful it would be to receive the bread of life and then refuse to share it with others.”

Page 119

Right now at Chapelgate there is a general sense (by this I mean those who are not among those directly involved in such ministries) that the things we do outside ourselves (in the City, among the Culture, etc.) are incidental and not especially necessary when in fact they should be what we are all about. The sense should be that the ministries to our people (the ‘insider’ ministries) should be benefits and equipping resources and advantages that accompany the larger mission, and not the other way around. Otherwise we will always appear to the watching world like a church that has a glass wall around it – protecting itself from the world that desperately needs the church. This is what churches become when ruled by fear: fear of doctrinal impurity, fear of a fallen world, fear of political liberalism, etc. We have to ask God’s Spirit to shed us of these fears! They are born of something other than the Gospel. They reflect a very ‘white’ way of looking at the world – protecting what it had rather than engaging in what God has called us to.

- An Environment of Authenticity in our Public Expression of the Gospel

The real issue here is our view of the Gospel. There is a whole layer of unchurched, as well as many church people who desire an expression that is not especially ‘modern’ but one that does draw them in and reflects life as it is. ‘Church’ as we have known it through the 50’s to the 80’s has changed. It is not automatically the place to go.

Do we believe that the Gospel is alive and constantly challenging who we are and how we live? Do we believe the Gospel to be the most important reality of our lives and our church? Are we willing to see the Gospel past our ideas of church and symbols of comfort and security in the church?

If we cannot answer these questions in the affirmative then there will always be something inauthentic in our expression of the Gospel – in how we worship, how we reach out, how we grow in the Faith and how we live our lives – as individuals and as a church community.

What unchurched people yearn for are things like ‘Authenticity,’ ‘Transparency,’ and ‘Relevance.’ This is not to say that ‘churched’ people don’t yearn for them, but the fact is that we often take these for granted, or we have become so acculturated into church politics and Christian vocabulary, and so intimidated by seemingly ‘together’ Christians that we have a difficult time believing that we can be authentic and transparent in the local body.

We have to ask hard questions:

- Are we effectively announcing that the Kingdom of God has come to the surrounding Region?
- Are we effectively reaching the 90% unchurched people in the region?
- Are we speaking the Gospel in the language of the culture?
- Are we really reaching the generations that will lead in the years to come?

The concerns I have raised here are not new, and they are not limited to Chapelgate. Far more qualified men have been raising them through the years. Francis Schaeffer, founder of L’Abrie in Switzerland and visiting lecturer at Covenant Theological Seminary, and Harvie Conn, Professor of Missiology at Westminster Theological Seminary, both home with the Lord, voiced these concerns in the decades that precede this century:

“I believe the church today is in real danger. It is in for a rough day. We are facing present pressures and present and future manipulations which will be so overwhelming in the days to come that they will make the battles of the last 30 years look like kindergarten child’s play.

The evangelical church seems to specialize in being behind... And the church today should be getting ready and talking about issues of tomorrow and not about issues of 20 and 30 years ago, because the church is going to be squeezed in a wringer... We already are, of course, losing many of our young people, losing them on every side. It would be impossible to say how many have come to L’Abrie from Christian backgrounds. And these young people have said, ‘You are our last hope.’ Why? Because they are smart enough to know that they have been given no answers, and they are opting out. They don’t care about what will happen when they are 25. They don’t even care if they are going to split their chromosomes by using drugs. The older generation hasn’t given them anything to care about. They have simply been told to believe. Doctrines have been given them without relating them to the hard, hard problems which these young people are facing. This in itself should make us ask questions. Where are we going? And what is our problem?”

“One of the greatest injustices we do to our young people is to ask them to be conservative. Christianity today is not conservative, but revolutionary. To be conservative today is to miss the whole point, for conservatism means standing in the flow of the status quo, and the status quo no longer belongs to us. Today we are an absolute minority. If we want to be fair, we must teach the young to be revolutionaries, revolutionaries against the status quo.”

Francis A. Schaeffer, The Church at the End of the 20th Century (1970), pp. 81-82

“For too long evangelical white Christian communities in the United States have had a ‘come’ structure, a parochialism that identifies with saints. One cannot be a missionary church and continue insisting that the world must come to the church on the church’s terms. It must become a ‘go’ structure. And it can do that only when its concerns are directed outside itself toward the poor, the abused, and the oppressed. The church must recapture its identity as the only organization in the world that exists for the sake of its nonmembers.”

“The locked-out feel not wanted, excluded from the fellowship of churches they have known. The cop-outs have found worship services dull, repetitious, unexciting. The pilgrims want to question the church and have their questions answered. They fault the traditional, authoritarian ‘take it or leave it’ style of Christian communication. The boxed-in react negatively to what they perceive to be the church’s emphasis on submission. The publicans raise questions about the credibility of a church that, according to them, says one thing and does another. Can we speak to them again and this time be heard?”

Harvie M. Conn, Evangelism – Doing Justice and Preaching Grace (1982), pp. 23-24.

We have to make some decisions – really one decision: *What is the Mission of the Chapelgate Presbyterian Church?*

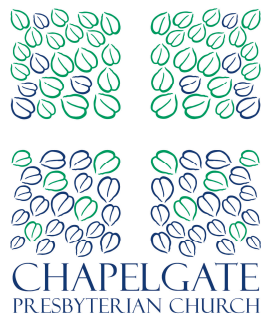
This decision will determine the commitments of the church. The Commitments will determine the ministries.

Here is what I believe the mission of this church should be:

Our Mission is to live out the Gospel in Word and Deed with the hope that God will bring Healing, Renewal and Peace to Greater Baltimore and the Nations

But there is more to this – and I’ll get into it later, because **the issue is not that people are more or less authentic** – it is about understanding our context as a particular body in space and time.

As you have already noticed, we are proposing a new Logo and Vision Statement. I will explain later in the paper, and my hope is that the paper as a whole will make it make sense as well.



Our Identity

I see a need for us to work on our Identity as a Church Community at Chapelgate. Right now it carries a bit of a rich, institutional, ‘traditionalistic church’ kind of identity. For much of the surrounding community we are not seen as a church that one could readily ‘fit into’ or feel at home in. It is not that we are this way in actuality, but perception is important in the world of church and right now we come across to the immediate community in a certain institutional way – and this needs to change in order for us to be as effective as we are called to be. We currently have what may be best articulated as an ‘Insider’s Identity.’ While I know firsthand the kindness and warmth of the Chapelgate Congregation, our ‘Outward Face’ does not necessarily show this.

Most of what I write will be in terms of Community. In his book, Blue Like Jazz Donald Miller says, “*The most difficult lie I have ever contended with is this: Life is a story about me.*” My hope is that we will continue to be and become a growing and loving Community at Chapelgate. There is so little of this in our Culture – Young people are flocking to any expression of Community. Developments continue to build ‘55-and-over’ sections to provide a sense of Community for mature adults. The Suburbs represent an isolated society and I believe that the Church is the one institution other than the family that can provide the hope and reality for those who would otherwise live alone.

What Kind of Community Should We Be Known As?

- **As a Community that Exalts Jesus and Lives Grace**

“Although it [the church] is not to be identified as the kingdom, it is called to be the community here on earth that demonstrates the glories of God’s reign. As the body of Christ, the church is called to live for the peace, love and joy of God’s reign.”

Mark R. Gornik, To Live in Peace

My hope is that the Howard County and Baltimore areas will notice it as obvious that the people who attend Chapelgate are a community of people who have been so impressed with this Jesus, that unlike most people who walk the earth, they have determined that, like Him they won’t live for themselves.

Jesus said in **John 13:35** – “By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

My prayer is that this will become a place where sinners always feel welcome, embraced and graced by the Gospel through the people who share in this community (more to come on this subject).

At the heart of this desire is the fact that Jesus has come and established that God reigns. We can be a Community of Grace because not even our shortcomings and the reality of

our flawed lives can undo what Jesus has established in His life, death, resurrection and immanent return.

How sweet it will be to become a church that lives out the ‘one anothers’ of the New Testament (‘love one another,’ ‘confess your sins to one another,’ ‘forgive one another,’ etc.), and that the world will see something magnificently Grace-filled about this community.

Unfortunately many churches exalt their doctrinal distinctives thinking that they have exalted Jesus, but they have not – many are more concerned with being right rather than being the face of Christ to a lost and dying world. But the Gospel does not stand apart from a Renewed heart and life – in other words, when the Gospel truly invades a life or church it renews that individual and that church – and it pours out into the world in a Gospel-centered way, bearing the fruit of love and transformation wherever it flows.

As I said on numerous occasions in the interviewing process, Chapelgate comes across as doctrinally sound but a bit out of touch on the human level, by way of observation.

I love Paul’s qualifying words in his push for doctrinal purity in **1 Timothy 1:5**:

“The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.”

Richard Lovelace writes well in his *Dynamics of Spiritual Life*:

“...experiences of renewal which are genuinely from the Holy Spirit are God-centered in character, based on worship, an appreciation of God’s worth and grandeur divorced from self-interest. Such experiences create humility in the convert rather than pride and issue in the creation of a new spirit of meekness, gentleness, forgiveness and mercy. They leave the believer hungering and thirsting after righteousness instead of satiated with self-congratulation. Most important, their end result is the performance of works of mercy and justice.”

Page 43

Our prayer needs to be that Jesus is lifted up and seen clearly – that in what we do, before people see the ‘correctness’ of it, that they see the One to Whom we do it for and because of.

We also need to be known as a church that loves people and receives them as they are. We know who we are and what our distinctives are and need to be – but before people embrace who we are they need to be convinced that we love them. Too many have been ‘burned’ by the institutional church and trust is now a precious commodity for the Church. My point is not that we embrace sin, but sinners – that regardless of where people are coming from that they get the sense that, because of the Gospel, and therefore

because of the truth about ourselves and where we come from, we are not afraid to 'touch' them.

- **As an Authentic Community**

“The contemporary church hungers for models of a more authentic Christian life in which glimpses of the Kingdom can be seen and the promise of the Kingdom is embodied.”

Christine D. Pohl, Making Room, p. 10.

Part of the reason that many of today's younger adults (45 years and under) are disenfranchised with the church is that for them it seems inauthentic. In the church they grew up in problems were hidden and issues were not really addressed. When their sin and struggle became intense they did not feel 'safe' enough in the church to open up. Such vulnerability seemed dangerous in an institution where everyone else seemed so perfect and where the reality of the presence of sin was always condemned or overlooked without any hint of Grace.

But we **are** a collection of sinners and the more our ministry reflects a heart for reaching into the messy realities of our condition the more people will feel safe in coming into our doors.

Now the amazing thing is that the Elders have been amazingly transparent with me since our arrival. You guys have opened up about your lives in beautiful ways. I am indebted to you for this.

And it is this kind of authenticity that is the desire of all ministry involvement for the younger adults and emerging young adults. Rather than support missionaries, they want mission. It isn't that what the church has historically done is inherently bad, it is just that *involvement* carries a greater value to this generation when it comes to ministry. As Leonard Sweet points out in his book, Carpe Manana, while the generations of the years past lived to work, this one works to play – it has seen the damaging effects on the family of 'all work and no play,' and it finds more value in doing mission than supporting it from afar.

This is why there seems to be such a contemporary disdain for the more program-driven forms of worship. It all seems too 'perfect' in a messy world with messy sinners.

And this is why we have removed, "True to the Word of God" from the bulletin. It isn't that we don't love the Word of God – it is that the Gospel teaches that **we really are not true to the Word of God** – this is a statement that does not ring authentic because it is not true to who we really are. The Word of God is true to us! Jesus is the Word of God, and like His disciples, we abandon Him every day. So when a person who does not know Christ, or one who has become alienated from the Church, come to Chapelgate – when they see this, they instinctively know that it isn't true. As an authentic community I

would rather have people presume that we are as incapable of being true to Christ as the next guy – because we are!

- **As a Healing Community**

This can't be overstated – that our church be seen as a place where healing happens. It will take some breakthroughs on our parts because this is not something readily welcomed, particularly in Reformed Suburban circles because it entails vulnerability and the exposing of the reality of the ugliness of our own sin – in other words, it de-privatizes the work of the Gospel in our church community – which is really what the 'one another' commands of the New Testament are all about. It challenges the suburban veneer. It isn't easy or comfortable but I can tell you that the churches that become known for this are very powerful and important churches in their respective communities.

I would venture to say that in most communities most of the people are hurting to some degree. They desire healing and answers, but they don't know where to find them and they don't know who they can trust. This means that we need testimonies of God's Grace to be offered on Sunday mornings. If you notice, most of our 'announcements' from the platform are either informational or 'insider' announcements. What we need is testimonies – people who have been rescued by Christ and transformed by the Gospel, even when their lives are still 'messy.' When this happens our people will melt – because they need healing as badly as anyone outside our walls.

But this is only half the story. As a healing community the Church is called to be a healing agent in the broken world – to share in God's Redemption Story. The announcement of the reign of Christ has to be accompanied with love and a broken heart for the City, Region and Nations.

The Scriptures bear this out:

“He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”

Micah 6:8

“O afflicted city, lashed by storms and not comforted, I will build you with stones of turquoise, your foundations with sapphires. I will make your battlements of rubies, your gates of sparkling jewels, and all your walls of precious stones. All your sons will be taught by the LORD, and great will be your children's peace. In righteousness you will be established: Tyranny will be far from you; you will have nothing to fear. Terror will be far removed; it will not come near you.”

Isaiah 54:11-14

“How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, ‘Your God reigns!’ Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices; together they shout for joy. When the LORD returns to Zion, they will see it with their own eyes. Burst into songs of joy together, you ruins of Jerusalem, for the LORD has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem.”

Isaiah 52:7-9

Through the ministry of the Church, the Kingdom of God comes ‘on earth as it is in heaven.’

The Role of the Diaconate in the Healing Community

Internally this carries great ramifications for our Deacons. I see the Diaconate as one of the most important bodies in the work of the Church. These are the guys God raised up to care for the church while the Apostles spread the Gospel throughout the Roman Empire (Acts 6).

I see good things among our Deacons and we need to empower them to expand their role in the church. They should really be in charge of Membership involvement in diaconal ministries. The Deacons would create avenues of involvement and then ‘staff’ them according to people’s gifts/passions to serve.

We need to have our Deacons as present in the church as our Elders. If we truly believe that the Ministry of the Gospel is equally important ‘in Deed’ as it is ‘in Word,’ then our Deacons need to be known. My suggestion is that we make them part of the Communion distribution group on Sunday mornings. Again, there is no true restriction on this – and our guys need to be seen as the Leaders they are.

Under the care and oversight of the Diaconate we could have Crisis Teams, Building Teams and other groupings of people who would go out into the church in the community and minister in times of need or in crises.

We can add to the Sunday ‘Teams’ which are under the oversight of the Deacons as well. We should have a Parking Lot Team that is ready with umbrellas whenever it rains, and whatever help one needs when it snows (I’m a novice at that one!). The Greeting Team should come under their care as well – Teams like these.

Potential Teams:

- The Mercy Ministries Team
- The Single Mom/Widow Car Care Team
- The Ministry to the Elderly Needs Team
- The Home Rebuilding/Restoration Team
- The City/Urban Renewal Team (Habitat, etc.)

- The Crisis Management Team
- The Building and Grounds Team
- The Benevolence Team
- The Parking Lot Team
- The Ushering Team
- The Greeting Team
- The Facilities Team

The Deacons should oversee what we could call, ‘Volunteer Sunday’ in which we recognize every volunteer in the church and the ministries they serve in whether here at the church or in the city – we would observe this with recognition, video and testimonies.

Through our Deacons I want our people to know that their expression of the Gospel is to be one of **Deed** as well as **Word**. Just as our Membership knows that it can come to the Elders for spiritual and marital leading, I want for them to know they can come to our Deacons as well. The guys already do a great job of overseeing the benevolence end of things for the Congregation – this is a wonderful thing.

- **As a Celebrating Community**

“Tepid preaching and lifeless worship have spread so many ashes on the fire of the gospel that we scarcely feel the glow anymore.”

Brennan Manning, The Signature of Jesus

When we worship we should be seen as a people who celebrate the God we serve. There should be no compromise in what we believe – whether in the messages or in the music. The music we offer should be doctrinally sound as well as alive and inspirational.

The reality is that we now have a divided congregation regarding Worship at Chapelgate. As I have observed, it doesn’t really matter what the percentages or numbers are – we have dear people on both sides of the issue who stand a real chance of being alienated if we misstep here (and I don’t want to do that!).

Here is the problem: Those who are more ‘Traditionalist’ in their desire for worship think that the more ‘Contemporary’ expression is noisy, messy and irreverent. And those who are more ‘Contemporary’ in their desire for worship see the more ‘Traditional’ service as inauthentic, showy and stiff. It is a real divide and I don’t see opinions changing. This church wasn’t planted yesterday – it doesn’t have a shared vision for such things and there is a lot of ‘blood’ to be spilled in such a conflict.

Who is right?

The real question is this: *What difference does it make?* If someone likes one expression it doesn’t automatically make the other one less spiritual, less appropriate or less right.

The fact is that we are at a crossroads – I firmly believe this – the more I look at the situation the more I realize that we are in a ‘generational overlap’ at Chapelgate. This is not surprising. The church grew to its zenith in the 70’s and 80’s. It represented a different genre of worship expression than the newer larger churches today (this is not unique to such a church). This generation knew a different era of public behavior. For them respect comes through quietness and church is meant to be a place where you participate in the singing and giving, but there is also a dimension in which one worships by watching as others ‘perform.’

Many of the people who loved the church as it was, are still with us – they are faithful and dear.

But then you have an entire culture of change happening in our midst – ignoring such a reality will be the death of this church – I firmly believe this. This generation (and it isn’t only Younger Adults – it is really a generation of church people more than anything) longs for a different expression with many of the same values and the same desire for biblical integrity. Their expression is one of ‘organic’ worship – it is less formal and more interactive and participatory. They like ancient symbols but don’t desire to feel as ‘spectators’ in worship. They love Tradition but they don’t want generational Tradition – they want the ‘way-back’ Tradition. They prefer simplicity of expression to a well-oiled, seamless worship service.

And I would be remiss to say this. Regardless of what we think or want to think, the majority of young adults and teenagers find little or no relevance in the church we all grew up in. The emerging generation sees little in the present structure/expression that it resonates with. The temptation is to say something like, ‘I learned to accept it and they can too.’ We can say this and things like this until we are blue in the face, but as we say it we will lose our future. There is no question in my mind about this. Our Young People are facing challenges and temptations and a culture that leaves them feeling as though the Church can never reach them where they are.

So we basically have four options. I have thought long and hard about this, praying, dialoguing and going back and forth.

Here are the options:

1. We Keep Things as They Are

Personally I enjoy our worship for the most part. It is a generally blended kind of worship. I like a lot of the new and a lot of the old music. Here is the problem with this: Just like anyone else, I can fall into thinking that what I like is what everyone resonates with – and this just isn’t the case. The fact is that some of the older folks are not comfortable with the worship as it is – I understand this. And many of the Young People are not comfortable with it either. How do I know this? For one thing they tell me and for another I see the churches (and therefore the kind of worship) they go to when they leave ‘the nest.’ I don’t think this is the answer.

2. We Change Everything for Both Services

I have had time to observe Chapelgate and as time passes, love grows. The Membership is swiftly becoming names and faces, both young and old that we hold dear. If I were an outside consultant it might be easy to arbitrarily ‘read’ the culture and then make recommendations that would impact people I don’t know. But this is not the case and I am reminded of the fact that many dear people who have great hearts for God are not ready to let go of worship, as they have known it. And I think it may be a big mistake to force this.

An Important Note:

I believe that in the next two options is our answer.

When Isaac moved his people to the Valley of Gerar (Genesis 26) he found the wells that his father, Abraham had dug. He uncovered them and rather than fight over them, he also dug new wells. This may just apply.

I believe we are at that place at this time in the history of this church – we are called to unearth the ancient wells – and to build new ones at the same time.

3. We Go to Two Distinct Worship Services

In this scenario we would have two very distinct services in which one is obviously Traditional and the other is overtly Contemporary. It has helped to listen to the differing opinions on this. There are some who are excited about the idea of two distinctly different services, but others who are not – they fear that we will sacrifice some of the healthy blend we now enjoy at Chapelgate.

4. We Shift the Two Services so that One is More Formal and the other is Less Formal – This is my preference

Here is How We Would Flesh This Out:

The More Formal Service

The more Formal Service will come with what one might expect in such a service. We would recite the Apostle’s Creed, pray the Lord’s Prayer and sing the Doxology weekly. This would be in addition to singing three hymns, listening to the music of the Choir, the Orchestra, the Organ and the Ensembles. There will still be somewhat of a blend, but it would be subtle so as to protect the integrity of its intention.

In this service the traditionally accepted tunes will be preserved for the hymns. The pastors will dress either in suits or in coats and ties. The Organ and Piano will be the predominant music instruments – and the only drums will be those used in the Orchestra. The formality of the Lord’s Supper will be protected – coats and ties will be required.

I feel strongly that the earlier service should be the more Formal Service as I believe that the reality is that it is represented by less people than the more informal expression of worship.

The More Informal Service

For this service there is a formalism we need to shed on Sunday mornings, while maintaining excellence in all we do.

Characteristics of this Service

- Communion will be less formal in its expression – For Jesus and the Disciples the first Lord's Supper was a simple, intimate and informal event. Those who serve will sit with their families and simply come forward and get the plates (in a far less regimented way) and dispense the elements. I would add that this really does not need to be relegated to Elders, or even men – why not celebrate this as a Community in every sense of the word?
- The Dress will be Neat but Relaxed – More and more I see people coming as they are – this is good. We need to not expect coats and ties – I haven't yet decided for myself. There needs to be a 'come-as-you-are' approach to worship, without the need to 'dress it up.' This does not mean that people who are more comfortable with coats and ties should be made to feel as though they are less welcome, by any means.
- We will employ the use of Testimonies in church. Our people and our visitors need to hear testimonies of God's Grace in worship. They need someone other than a pastor – men and women – who can bear witness to the work of God in their lives. This is such a powerful medium of the Gospel. Many people don't even 'hear' the pastor when he opens up because they see him as being 'above' them – we know this isn't true, but the perception is real – but they 'hear' people 'like them.'
- We will be more creative regarding Communication in Worship – God has blessed us with wonderful screens that can be used, not only to put words to songs and sermon notes before the people, but also to creatively interweave relevant and applicable video into the service according to the thrust of the Sunday message. This can come in the form of movie clips or 'interviews on the streets.'

Part of this is accepting the reality that for many in our Community/Culture this church needs to change on Sunday mornings. I received a letter just recently in which a member writes (among other things):

I am a member of Chapelgate, however, I have stopped attending in the recent months due to dissatisfaction with Sunday's services. I am a 25 year old, single mom, and during my most recent attendance for Chapelgate's Mother's Day service, I did not see many people my age. It makes sense, because the service caters to an older generation. I believe most younger members who are at Chapelgate attend because it is their family's church, but I don't think they are excited enough to invite their friends. I am happy to see changes happening, because like you, I believe Chapelgate can do better at reaching new people for Jesus. I'd like to explain further how I have been "reached" by different service styles.

This is the reality of where Chapelgate is – and it is time for us to make some adjustments in the most tender and sensitive of ways without leaving the impression that it will take another 50 years to get there. But how do we do this without alienating some dear Members who have given so much of themselves to the ministry of this church? For me the answer is obvious. Let's respect the 'overlap' and enjoy the transition – maybe the broader Church will learn something.

If we go to the two distinct services I would propose that four times a year we meet together and blend who and what we are with a large picnic or some kind of celebration in which we put the people together and remember that we are one Community. With this we would need to offer two layers of Sunday School to make it possible for adults to experience Adult Education regardless of the service they attend.

I also suggest that instead of having a Worship Committee we form two Teams that will work with Steve Hammaker and me, according to the particular services they represent. These Teams will serve as resources for ideas and support.

- **As a Community that Enjoys Renewal**

“Ultimately, the church as a community that rightly relates to God and one another has its life in the fellowship of the triune God. A communion and fellowship of love, the Triune life flows over into the formation of a loving and giving Christian community.”

Mark R. Gornik, To Live in Peace, p. 75.

My prayer is that God will constantly bring the expectation of Renewal – that we would exist in continuing self-examination, Grace and evangelistic zeal – and that we would be known as a church that exhibits the Gospel in every expression of ministry.

We live in a world where people have messy lives (including us!). Therefore we need to find ways to creatively present, model and encourage Truth. Jesus said, “I am the... Truth...” so this means that our commitment to Truth needs to be ‘Incarnational’ – it needs to be lived out in the flesh and demonstrated in how we live as individuals and as a church community.

This means that there has to be an honest willingness on our part as leaders to constantly scrutinize what we do (I would say on an annual basis at our Retreat). We need to inform the Congregation that nothing we do is above this scrutiny for the sake of the work of the Kingdom.

This was the importance of beginning to deal with the whole worship controversy at Chapelgate (part of the problem is settled and accepted ways that have not put up against the filter of Truth). Eventually three things happen when we don't do this: First, we cause pain by not dealing with things. Second, we impede true nurture and growth among our people, and Third, and perhaps most tragically, we make mountains out of issues that won't aid a single person in their relation to the Kingdom of God.

Christian Education at Chapelgate

I am encouraged to spend time with Ariel Adams – he chairs our CE Committee and it is obvious to me that he desires for there to be an increasingly relevant educational flow at Chapelgate.

In the fall he will be leading a study (15 weeks) of Paul Tripp's video series on raising children in Adult Sunday School (we need a different name for this, by the way). We will be starting a class for College Students.

We need to be open to having very 'practical' classes (such as the one Ariel will be teaching), and classes that will 'move' people along in the Faith.

Here are some possibilities:

- **Christianity for Skeptics** – A class for people who are drawn to the Faith but who still have a hard time believing it can be true. A good book to study in this would be C.S. Lewis' Mere Christianity.
- **Christianity 101** – A Class for people who know Christ, or who have known Him, but are embarrassed to admit that they don't know the Faith well. We would remove that embarrassment by offering a class that I suspect would have a lot of people in it.
- **Bible Study** – This would be a class for people who just want to learn God's Word in an expository way. They have wrestled with much and now want to grow deeper. Someone like Earl Crown or Wan Oh would be great for this class.
- **Lessons in Mercy** – A Class that follows the life of Christ and demonstrates His commitment to the broken, the outcasts, the poor and the forgotten – and then finds ways to apply this in individual and corporate church life. If we are going to be 'missional' (see the next section) then we need to begin to infuse this into our 'ecclesiastical veins.'

- **The Gospel in the Headlines** – This would be a class that does not accept political lines as the way in which to process and filter what is going on in the world an headlines – rather it teaches (in an engaging way) our people to process all things through the lens of the Gospel by wrestling through our pre-conceived notions of life and faith.

This is just a sampling and certainly not meant to be ‘the way it has to .’

As to our Children and Young People, we need to be committed to teaching them from the earliest age, who they are in Christ and what and who we are as a church in relation to the Gospel. I am a firm believer in Scripture memorization and hope to see this implemented at the earliest stages of development with our Children (which may already be the case).

The New Member’s Class

I believe we need to move the New Member’s Class to Sunday evenings at 5:00 PM – It is important that the Sr. Pastor have a major role in the class in a church this size as there is little opportunity for contact between them otherwise.

In addition I would want to employ Ministry Leaders (Elders, Deacons, Staff and other Lay Leadership) in the process. This should not be as information-heavy as it has been. We can still cover many of the basics of who we are and what we believe.

More than anything, ‘who we are’ matters the most. People need to know who we are in every way. Staff, Officers and Ministry Leaders should be involved in articulating the various ministries and opportunities involved at Chapelgate.

The Class needs to change some. It is a bit too involved and can be overwhelming. The old language *Confession* should be replaced by the Modern Translation. Steve Smallman’s What is a Reformed Church should be distributed. Either Mere Christianity or Basic Christianity should be made available to the people.

As with in Miami Katherine and I will be having an Open House at our home for the New Members and we are overjoyed that Charlie and Nancy Sutter have them over for lunch after they join.

- **As a Missional Church**

“Remember, you are never more like God than when you are living in relationships with God’s people and working in partnerships for the re-creation and redemption of God’s world.”

Ray Bakke, A Theology as big as the City, p. 35.

Our Mission is to live out the Gospel in Word and Deed with the hope that God will bring Healing, Renewal and Peace to Greater Baltimore and the Nations for His Glory

It is crucial that our Membership and every Individual who walks through our doors understand and sense that we are a church with a Mission – that our Mission is Gospel-driven and Kingdom-centered. We don't want people to join Chapelgate just because they want to be part of **any** church. We want people who share our Values and who want to participate in our Mission – anything less will water down our effectiveness and lead to our becoming a church that is more concerned with mundane, unimportant matters rather than the matters we have been called to by Christ.

We are a Regional Church built on 63 acres, optimally positioned and centrally located. We have been blessed with great resources. We are situated in the most educated county in the country. This 'beacon on a hill' has to embrace a grand mission – anything less would be poor stewardship. To play 'church-as-usual' would be to waste the opportunity God has given us.

This translates into what we have to expect of our Members. Every Member who joins Chapelgate needs to have it impressed on them that if they join they are committing to an active role in the mission of this church. This may be as simple as tutoring a child from the inner city or as involved as beginning a ministry that flourishes into a life ministry. The real point is that church life is outward in nature and that it should be expected of our Membership that they are involved in some such ministry.

I would want to see this infused into every dimension of ministry at the church – from the Children's Ministries to the Youth Ministries.

Our Mission should involve every level of Chapelgate activity:

Corporate

- World Missions
- Church Planting
- City/Mercy Ministries

Individual

- Personal Discipleship
- Personal involvement in a Small Group
- Personal Ministry of Renewal (Mentorships, Service Opportunities/Projects in the City)
- Family Ministry (Family Missions Trips, Family Involvement in the City Ministries, etc.)

Session-Diaconate Ministry Development Team

Along these lines I would like for us to form a new Team that incorporates Members-at-large, male and female, but that is a joint Team of the Session and Diaconate. The purpose of this Team would be to constantly assess our Mission and to consider the most effective and innovative ways we can make the Mission ‘happen.’

This team would meet with the Sr. Pastor, but primarily with the Minister of Ministry Development and Outreach, and together they would study the Community, the Culture, the City, Trends and other Churches as they assess our paradigms and consider how we can minister most effectively in our Mission. They would be the Team that helps us move past ‘the way we’ve always done it’ if that is what we need to do.

- **As a Multiplying Church**

I know that historically at Chapelgate Church Planting has been more incidental than intentional – but we need to take our place as a resource church within the Denomination and begin to formulate a plan for starting new works throughout the region and in between us and the major cities that surround us (see below).

It is time for Chapelgate to enter into the Church Planting movement in the PCA. We need to fund this. In order to see this come to fruition we need a Church Planting Team at Chapelgate. Our philosophy needs to be one in which many churches are daughtered under the ministry of this church. They do not need to be large churches, and in fact I don’t foresee the need for planting other large churches at all unless this is just a natural thing that happens. What they need to be is churches that minister the Gospel effectively in the communities in which they are birthed. The growing communities should have growing churches, but if we plant 25 effective 100-150 Member churches throughout the region I would be thrilled – that would be success.

The Church Planting Team will do three things:

1. It will plot a strategy for planting churches in the next 15 years between our present location and the major cities that surround us – Baltimore, DC and Philadelphia. In doing so it will create a network of like-minded churches that will grow as churches are planted – and thus share in the continuing work.
2. It will align us with other organizations and networks such as the Church Planting Center at Redeemer PCA in New York, McLaine Presbyterian Church near DC, the Park Cities Network in Dallas, and MNA in Atlanta for the sake of sharing in the work, gaining wisdom and insight, and recruiting men who will start churches in the region (Terry Gyger of Redeemer’s Church Planting Center has sent me two of their Church Planting Manuals – largely seen as the standard-bearer).
3. It will present each new work before the Session and Congregation as we launch the churches.

4. It will work in a Network of churches throughout the Greater Baltimore area with the idea that together we will replenish the entire area with new works. I have spoken with Craig Garriott of Faith and we are going to organize pastors to come together and begin the strategy process.
5. It will oversee the funding of such projects. My recommendation is that we take \$100,000 of the Home Missions Budget and make it the Church Planting Budget. This will enable this group to have a substantial beginning amount of money to begin projects, recruiting candidates and partnering with other churches.

Off-Site Congregations

One of the ways we may make this a reality is to ‘plant’ off-site congregations. What I mean by this is that we can begin to have Elders have small groups of people (25-50) in areas that we would like to begin new works. Instead of having a new pastor for every work right away, we can have a live feed to the sermon from Chapelgate while providing live music and community-related activities on site. The Harbor Presbyterian Church network is doing this quite successfully in San Diego, California. Redeemer in NYC has done so as well and the Seven Rivers Presbyterian Church is launching into this. We could really have one church with several congregations that comes together in semi-annual celebrations – very exciting.

Making this Reality (Infusing it into our DNA)

Part of the reason Churches are not good ‘multipliers’ is that they do not have a good ‘stream’ of pastors-in-training, and part of the reason for this is that there is not a good vehicle for training potential pastors without asking these men to leave their jobs, their hometown and their context in order to pay a lot of money to get an education. Many potential ministers never see this potential realized as a result. Much of the traditional seminary model/experience lifts a man out of his context and trains him under a rubric that is not indigenous to the world he lives in – it is largely impractical.

I propose that we start a **Seminary** at Chapelgate. In my opinion this is the future of seminary training and the closest biblical model we have. If you spoke with any of our Missionaries you found that Miami International Seminary provides one of the best platforms for cross-cultural training in the world. I don’t say this to boast (we did start it at Old Cutler), but to impress on you that in the near future it will be the institutions that streamline the process and make accessibility the rule rather than the exception that will produce the most ministers and ministry leaders. The City Church of New York, started by former Chapelgate Member, Mark Gornick, is one such seminary. In such a seminary the preparation becomes ‘the thing’ rather than the expense and geography. And I have to say this: in a society that is becoming less and less ‘white,’ the historically ‘white’ institutions (how they teach, their culture and what they demand) are becoming less and less effective in this increasingly multi-cultural/ethnic world we live in.

It may be possible to partner with some of the larger institutions, and I would welcome this, but my experience is that the inherent problem with this is that there comes a financial burden to the church, passed on by the larger organization, and therefore the students, that make this prohibitive – More on this later.

- **As a Church that Engages the Culture**

“We do our best to reach out to people, one by one by one. Yet when the gospel is about the kingdom of God, the mission of the gospel starts to take on all sorts of new dimensions. No longer is it just about helping individuals find salvation in Jesus. It is also about bringing the loving reign of God wherever there is the darkness of sin and death.”

Allen Mitsuo Wakabayashi, Kingdom Come, p. 107.

It should be our hope to see the culture around us renewed by the Gospel. However many and most don't believe that the Church can speak the languages of the culture and so its voice is often discounted in the public arena. This is not due to ignorance on the part of the Church, but an unwillingness to engage with the world as well as a poor understanding of the whole matter of being 'in the world, but not of the world.'

What many churches do (in a 'Program-driven' environment) is that they offer the best they can under a 'spiritual' rubric in order to offer the 'Christian alternative.' In the process they rarely reach the very world they hope to reach (remember, we are 'gatherers!'), and they lose out on so much 'Common Grace' that God has poured out into the culture that is beautiful and good.

What I would propose is that we refuse to shrink back from the culture, but instead engage in it.

I love Abraham Kuyper's powerful statement in his address to the Free University of Amsterdam entitled, *Sphere Sovereignty*:

“Oh, no single piece of our mental world is to be hermetically sealed off from the rest, and there is not a square inch of the whole domain of our human existence over which Christ, who is Sovereign over *all*, does not cry: 'Mine!'”

God has allowed much in this world to declare His glory in spite of its unglorified state. We have an opportunity to use the arts to reach the culture in the most creative of apologetics.

Rich Staroneck has vast connections with the arts community in the Baltimore area. He is an accomplished musician who can plug us into the surrounding community. And he has a good 'gut' for the cultural ethos and how the culture sees and responds to the church.

The sky is the limit on what we can do.

Consider the possibilities:

- *Jazz Under the Stars* – A musical offering in the church parking lot in the fall. Our people could serve up Cider, Hot Chocolate and an evening of cool jazz here in Howard County. This could become an annual event that our church would host. It would be a huge cultural, community offering and it would expose the church to the community in a fresh way, and more importantly, it would expose the community to Chapelgate in a unique way. You will read more of this later.
- *Handel's Messiah* – This could be a Christmas season offering in which we go all out, perhaps renting out an auditorium in which our Music Ministry invites the community to participate.
- *A Commitment to Beauty in Art at Chapelgate* – We have already (through Scott Simmons) excited a group of photographers who will display their works in our lobby area of the church – they belong to the photography guild that utilizes the church facility (Scott is a member of the guild). Other Artists in the Chapelgate Community have told me how delighted they are at the thought.
- *Dinner Theater* – Our Young People at Chapelgate Christian School presented Little Women last month – it was fabulous. How about hosting a series of plays for adults in the community – perhaps a musical each year. We did this in Miami and drew thousands from the community each time – a real cultural ‘foot in the door.’
- *Concert Series/Special Performances* – My hope is that our Worship Center will become a center in which we can house the finest performances in the Region. We could host Christian Recording Artists, a Lecture Series, the National Christian Choir, and other mediums of the performing arts. We could host multi-cultural offerings. Lois Muhl has informed me that there is precedent for this at Chapelgate.
- *An Arts Festival* – Our property makes it possible for us to host a magnificent arts festival in the spring or fall on the grounds.
- *In-Town Offerings* – Christmas and Spring seasons are ripe for groups that perform in the Malls or Parks. I would foresee a Jazz Combo or Classical Ensemble or Drama Troupe that present offerings (not especially Christian, but definitely from Chapelgate) to the broader community.
- *Ballet Magnificat* – There is a troupe of Christian Dancers based out of Jackson, Mississippi. It is led by Kathy Thibedeaux, a Prima Dona who,

along with her husband, Keith Thibedeaux (who played ‘Little Ricky’ on the *I Love Lucy* show) has built a ministry that takes powerful Scripture and Christian music, and then brings them together for a magnificent interpretive ballet offering. It is stunning and breathtaking.

These are just examples – there is so much we can be to the Region – and we should!

Estimated Cost: \$25,000 the First Year

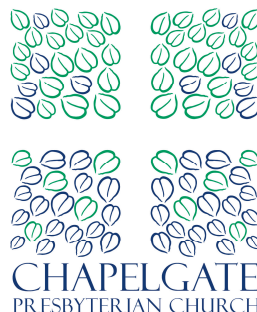
Why such emphasis on the Culture and the Arts?

Because Chapelgate is situated in one of the most affluent and educated communities in the nation (Howard County). Howard County has a thriving arts community. Education and the arts are what this community is all about. If Chapelgate is willing to be a cultural ‘player’ in Howard County, I believe it will be one of the most influential entities in the region that is culturally fertile and ripe for the harvest.

A commitment to the culture is really a willingness to live out the Gospel as Jesus and the apostles did in their context. A commitment to the culture is a commitment to the mission of the Gospel.

This really is the thrust of Paul’s words in **1 Corinthians 9:19-23**:

“Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God’s law but am under Christ’s law), so as to win those not having the law. To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessing.”



Two Important Things that Need to be Said

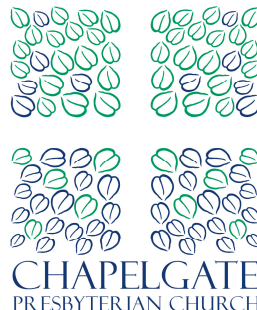
- I can't begin to express the importance of a solid, growing Youth Ministry. We have the Staff in place – good, good people. Now we need two things: a Facility (which I'll speak to later in the paper), and a broader Mission for the Youth Ministry. I want for our Youth Ministry to be a 'Center' in and of itself for the broader community. I see Burger Bash's, Concerts and other Community-wide activities throughout the year where Outreach is the goal and where our Young People share in the Mission of the church in their world. Our Young People should go on a significant Missions Trip every year, whether into the City of Baltimore, some other US City, or abroad. I want them to leave this ministry with an enlarged view of their place in the world for the sake of Christ.

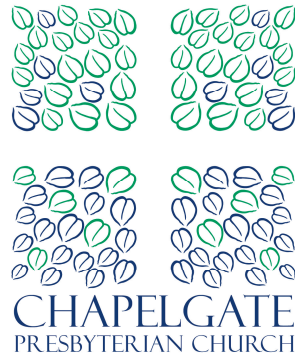
Our Youth Staff need to go to the finest Youth Leaders gatherings annually. Right now, and for some time now, the best is the Youth Specialties Conference offered annually in two locations nationally. A lot of the denominational stuff is geared more to smaller churches and does not offer much to larger congregations such as Chapelgate's.

- The same goes for Children's Ministries. The surest way to Parents' hearts is through their Children. And the best way to reach adults is to reach them when they are young. Statistically, 85% of all people who come to Christ do so before they reach age 18.

Our VBS program should be opened up to the broader Community, as well as activities such as our Easter Egg Hunt. The Children's Ministry is often sole link to faith that many people have in their lives. I foresee a Children's 'World' here at Chapelgate – something along the lines of Perimeter Presbyterian Church in Atlanta or Willow Creek Church in Chicago. We need to send our Staff to any conferences they offer so as to gain an enlarged vision for our Children.

While I could put this under Church Plant, I would add that we need a section, even a wing in our building that is solely dedicated to Children's Ministries – one that is so Child 'friendly' and appealing that these Little Ones can't wait to be at church – with the hope that it is open every day!





The Logo and Vision Statement

Our Logo comes from Member, Lynsey Ring, who spent time on our property and designed this beautiful offering. The Vision Statement comes from hours of prayer and discussion among Directors and Ministers. It contains the essence of what we hope this ministry will be as an agent of Redemption in the Community, the Culture, the City and among the Nations.

Let me explain both:

The Logo

The logo is actually taken from the property. The leaves are derived from the Bradford Pear Trees in the parking lot. If you stand at the bottom of the upper deck of parking and look up the line of Bradford Pears, as I have, you will see at the end of this line and in the middle of the trees, the Cross on the church facility – what a beautiful sight. It is simple, classy, artistic and lovely. Eventually I would like for the permanent sign at the front of the property to have the leaves surround the Cross (in the same medium).

Here's the breakdown of the elements of the logo:

The Cross speaks to the Focus of the Church

Galatians 6:14 – May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

It is both a Cross and a Path – We live in the path of the Cross.

The Leaves speak to the Mission of the Church

Ezekiel 47:12 – Fruit trees of all kinds will grow on both banks of the river. Their leaves will not wither, nor will their fruit fail. Every month they will bear, because the water

from the sanctuary flows to them. Their fruit will serve for food and their leaves for healing.

You could say that the Cross and Leaves symbolize the Culture we desire at this church – a Gospel-Driven, Fruit-bearing and Healing Community. You note that the leaves are emanating outwardly from the Cross as we are to go out into the world with this life-giving message of the Gospel.

The Vision Statement

Healing – Renewal – Peace

The Vision Statement does not point to man – it captures the hope of the Church for what Christ alone brings. We considered many possible ‘statements’ but were always brought back to the ‘simple.’ We figured that anyone could read this Vision statement and be drawn to what it offers. Our job as a church is to demonstrate that it all comes through Jesus.

Healing

The Gospel teaches that Jesus Christ is the only true source of healing for individuals, relationships, families, churches and nations.

Chapelgate is a community of people, broken and poured out to a broken world that is in need of the healing power of the Gospel we have received in Christ.

Our desire is for people to come to Chapelgate and experience the healing power of the Gospel and then to become healing agents in the world.

Renewal

The Gospel is the announcement that the Kingdom of God has come through Jesus who has reversed the curse of the Garden by His work on the Cross. The Resurrection of Jesus promises that those who follow Him in faith are made new and given the hope that one day every vestige of sin’s curse will be gone – in heaven.

We believe the Gospel alone has the power to make all things new here at Chapelgate, in individual lives, in the Culture, throughout the City and in the Nations. Our prayer is for a movement of Renewal to pour outside the walls of this church community through the transforming work of the Gospel among the people within this community.

Peace

The Gospel assures that when a person knows Jesus Christ by faith, there is reconciliation where there had once been alienation – because of sin – that we are justified from our sin and given peace with God through Jesus. This peace is ‘other-worldly’ in that it penetrates to our hearts regardless of our circumstances.

We desire to be a ‘peacemaker’ in a tormented society and world that knows no peace and only searches where it cannot be found apart from Jesus, the Prince of Peace.

Core Values

- **The Gospel** – The Gospel is the Good News – the message that announces that God has provided a way for people to be reconciled to Him and that what was destroyed in the Garden has been restored in Jesus. It reveals that Jesus Christ has come and has opened heaven to those who know Him by Faith. The Gospel is the transforming power of God that brings salvation to individuals, peace to the heart, healing to communities, hope to the nations and renewal to the culture.

Gospel Imperatives

- Love

Many waters cannot quench love; rivers cannot wash it away. If one were to give all the wealth of his house for love, it would be utterly scorned.

Song of Solomon 8:7

For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died.

2 Corinthians 5:14

We know that if what we do is not done in Love, it will be of no effect in the church or the world. This Love is to be one that gives with no expectation of return in the belief that what is done in the Name of Christ is never squandered.

- Justice

“Your people will rebuild the ancient ruins and will raise up the age-old foundations; you will be called Repairer of Broken Walls, Restorer of Streets with Dwellings.”

Isaiah 58:12

Because we live in a ‘broken’ or fallen world the Church is called to care past its own comfort with a broken heart for the injustices in our world. The Gospel teaches that we are connected in this humanity and can’t remove ourselves from the needs of the community, city, culture and nations. If anything, the opposite as we are to be ‘rebuilders’ and ‘restorers’ because of the restorative work of the Gospel in us.

– Mercy

“The King will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.’”

Matthew 25:40

The Gospel never asks how a person got ‘there.’ It acknowledges the need and then bends in pity/mercy to aid in that need, in the Name of Jesus. The Church is called to abandon political and societal labels and serve as a Merciful presence in the Culture.

– Grace

From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another.

John 1:16

As the Church we are called to teach, model and live out the beautiful reality that we are saved and sanctified by Grace – to be living testimonies against the natural thinking that one has to earn his way into God’s favor. We believe that through a Community of Grace that practices Forgiveness and Mercy the world will better see our God for who He really is.

– Peace

“Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the LORD for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.”

Jeremiah 29:7

As Christians we are called to be ‘peacemakers’ (Matthew 5). Christ alone is our Peace and through Him we are called to announce in Word and Deed that He makes us safe in Him, that with Him the lion lies down with the lamb. In Word we present Him as the Prince of Peace, our only source of inner healing. In Deed we present Him through ourselves as we enter the world as agents of mercy with the hope that our efforts will bring a deepening safety because of the influence of the Gospel.

– Multi-Culturalism

After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb...

Revelation 7:9

The Gospel alone breaks down the barriers that exist because of sin, including the barriers that exist between nations, races and cultures. And it creates a New Community – the Community of the Redeemed – One New People who find their identity in Christ while bringing the uniqueness and beauty of their own ethnicities to the Table of Christ.

- **Jesus Christ** – Jesus is the only hope of mankind. He is the One True Righteous One. He is eternally God and in time became a human being – in order to live a perfectly righteous life and then to die on the Cross for our sins. By looking to Jesus in faith the slave to sin is transformed into a son or daughter of God and given the promise of eternal life through Him.
- **The Word of God** – The Scriptures are the Revelation of God – the Story of Redemption – They contain God’s invitation to enter into His Story through Christ’s work on our behalf. We receive the Word of God as Truth – authoritative for life and faith – it is inspired, inerrant and holy.

- Worship

We were created to Worship God and find no greater fulfillment than when we are engaged in worshipping Him. In Worship we do as a Community what we are called to do as individuals as we believe that all of life is to be an expression of Worship. Sunday is a time of gathering and celebration for the Body of Christ.

- Education

Education is a major component in the ‘discipling’ arm of the Church. Through various means of education we hope to instill a Christian ‘World-and-Life’ view in which our people will learn to process every experience through the filter of the Gospel and thus better serve as redeeming agents in the world, as well as grow in the Faith. So our commitment to education is not to increase our information base (“...knowledge puffs up...” – 1 Corinthians 13), so much as it is to grow in order to increase our vision for the Gospel and heart for its work.

- **The Church** – The Church is people – Christ-followers throughout history from all walks of life, cultures and ethnicities. Chapelgate is a local expression of the greater Body of Christ – a Community of broken people who have been healed in the Gospel by Jesus.
- **Community** – Because God has designed us as relational beings He has called the Church to live as Community. In this Community we are equipped with gifts for the purpose of ministering to one another (edification) in order to effectively serve the world we live in (mission).

– Small Groups

Small Groups are the lifeblood of a vibrant church – it is the church community broken down into smaller, more intimate communities. In Small Groups we are the church to one another in the most personal and practical of ways. It is the hope that every Member will be in a Small Group – that the needs of the Membership will be met, not institutionally, but individually through a caring body of people who know one another in this context.

– Diaconal Ministry

Diaconal Ministry is the ‘Good Works’ agency of the Church. It is not limited to a body of ordained Officers. The Scriptures bear out that every Member is to be a minister within the Body of Christ. Through Diaconal Ministry the Chapelgate Community needs are known and met in order to equip and make well those who are called to be of similar service to the world around us.

– The Sacraments

In the Lord’s Supper and Baptism we come together as the Body of Christ in a mystical and sweet way – as these sacraments are living pronouncements of the work of the Gospel in us.

- **The Mission of the Church** – As a Church Community we embrace Jesus’ challenge to be ‘Salt and Light’ to the World. We acknowledge that the Church does not exist for itself – that it has been called to serve as a living announcement that the Kingdom of God has come with salvation and healing.

Our Mission is to live out the Gospel in Word and Deed with the hope that God will bring Healing, Renewal and Peace to Greater Baltimore and the Nations

– Planting Churches throughout the Region

We believe that God transforms communities through the ministry of Gospel-driven churches. Our commitment is to plant churches throughout the region with the hope of spreading a Gospel movement here in Maryland and beyond (there is more on this later in the paper).

– The Proclamation of the Gospel to the Nations

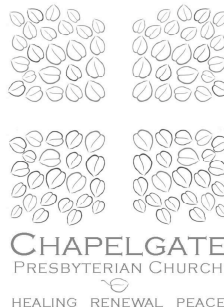
Chapelgate has formed partnerships with missionaries and agencies around the world. It is not uncommon for Members from within the Chapelgate Community to serve on the Mission Field either through Short-Term Missions Trips, or full time.

– A Heart for the City

As a church in the Baltimore suburbs Chapelgate is committed to ‘seek the peace of the city.’ Baltimore is the 3rd most dangerous city with population of 500,000 or more in the US (Washington DC is ranked 2nd). Chapelgate is situated between the two. We believe that the Gospel is the only true hope for the City. Through partnerships with the City churches, ministries and city and county services our desire is to be a healing agent of Mercy and Justice in Baltimore. Our hope is for Members to find their place in the work of the Gospel and love and serve the City in the Name of Christ.

– Cultural Renewal

We are committed to serve as a restorative presence in the culture. Before the fall God made all things to be good. We recognize that the Gospel is redemptive and that much that through the influence of a Gospel-driven church the culture tastes of this redemption and even becomes more what it was originally created to be.



- **Staff Concerns and Thoughts**

- **The budget for Staff is low** for the standards of a church and budget the size of Chapelgate. We need to pay more (not me, but the others) and hire more. I will be making some recommendations to the Personnel Committee for raises that will bring some current Staff to the levels they should be at. The Committee did a great job last year of beginning this process.
- My observation is that **we are good at crunching numbers, updating databases and making reports**, but we do not expend enough energy in actual ministry. Our Directors and Ministers are either understaffed or underpaid, or both. We need to make some adjustments and some tough calls here.
- **We need to change our classification of Staff** from Senior Staff and Program Staff to Ministers and Directors. This is what we really are – the other classifications seem too corporate and a bit demeaning.
- **We need active Internships/Apprenticeships at Chapelgate:**

We need to begin to take advantage of the Internship opportunities out there. MNA has a Church Planting internship program. The Seminaries have men who will need to put in a year of ministry experience before being ordained. Colleges such as Covenant in Lookout Mountain, TN, have students who are looking for summer work in churches.

Each Intern would have a Ruling Elder who will provide oversight and encouragement on a monthly basis, and a Teaching Elder who provides mentoring on a weekly basis.

Internships are an inexpensive way of adding to Staff without draining the budget. But more important it marks the beginning of a flow of sending people into the ministry.

Essential Ministries/Positions

There are certain Ministries that I see as essential for the future work here. Some will demand staffing and others will demand reassignment of present Staff, and frankly, some will only be possible if we pare down some positions. What you will notice that is missing is an Executive Pastor. I honestly don't believe we need one, per se, at this point. We have worked hard these two months to establish trust between the Sr. Pastor and the rest of the Ministry Staff – and we are getting there slowly but surely – I am proud of the Staff, and would hate to put a 'buffer' between us right now. Anyone I would hire for this position would need to protect my relationship with the Staff. I don't address the **Director of Children's Ministries** and here because we already have a Team that is involved in the search process, as well as the **Director/Minister of Families** as Steve Dallwig has already been given this responsibility. My desire for Steve is that he counsel and lead our Families in development through Seminars, Classes, Outings and Family Retreats.

As to **Children's Ministries** I would say that we need this to be a beautiful, well-run, well-staffed and well-financed ministry in the church. If we want to draw the future we have to afford whoever runs this particular ministry the resources to do everything with complete excellence. My hope is that it will be a major outreach to the community, whether through VBS and Sunday School, or Mother's Day Out, or through some sort of Sports League. The sky is the limit for a church that is willing to go all out for its Children and Youth.

I want to see the **Youth Ministries** continue to develop with a solid Sunday and weekly ministry along with in-City as well as overseas Missions Trips. There will be more on the Youth when we get to the Church Facilities.

Reassignments

– **Mike Rallo – Director of Community Ministries**

“Mercy has an impact. It melts hearts. It removes objections. It forces respect out of even those hostile to the gospel... The ministry of mercy within the Christian community is perhaps the most startling and visible display of our love for one another.”

Timothy J. Keller, Ministries of Mercy, p. 107.

Mike will be responsible for championing the whole matter of Mercy and Wholeness for the Chapelgate church community and for connecting Chapelgate to the broader community we live in, as well as to the City of Baltimore. The Counseling Ministry, Celebrate Recovery, Prison Ministry and our ministries to Broken Families will come under his purview. He will establish vital relationships with the various service organizations in the church that deal with the well being of these respective areas. He will also find ways for Chapelgate to forge partnerships with community and Baltimore

organizations with the hope that we will become a redemptive presence in these communities.

The job of this individual is not so much to invent a new ‘wheel’ but to represent a kind of umbrella organization that finds where all the spokes of the current wheel are so as to connect our people and plug them into ministry. This means that he will also be responsible for training and connecting Members into these ministries so as to provide a link for service among our people.

He would begin in our New Member’s Class as we educate people in what this church ministry is all about. We will want all of our New Members to join with the understanding that we are connected to our immediate community and City – that their Membership involves more than receiving for their benefit and for the benefit of this church, but also to be contributors to the work of the Gospel in the area and surrounding areas.

I would also want us to help the Denomination with this. As this is developed we can host an annual Conference that aids other churches in realizing this calling. There are churches that have done well in establishing such ministries: Newsong in Baltimore, Newsong and Redeemer in NYC, Christ Community in Franklin, TN and Old Cutler in Miami, to name a few. I have already made contact with Scotty Smith at Christ Community and he has availed his man for our man to interact with – this is a great gift.

My desire is for Mike Rallo to lead in this. It is something he desires, and has desired for some time. Everything he presently does will fit under the umbrella of his position. He has made some essential contacts and has already forged important relationships with City ministries.

I would want Mike to form or join a network of such people, forging relationships with churches and organizations that ultimately sharpen our heart for the Gospel in the City and enable us to be a resource as well.

– **Dwayne Dixon – Director/Minister of Small Groups**

Dwayne Dixon currently oversees Small Groups and Care – his heart is with Small Groups and it is my desire that we give this exclusively to Dwayne.

He will connect us to the Community by connecting us to one another. He will work in concert with the Minister of Pastoral Care and coordinate what we do in the homes along with what we do in the classroom.

He will develop or discover materials for our Small Groups – this may come in the form of sermon digestion, Bible study or some kind of study of a particular subject.

He will also be responsible for training Leaders, securing Host Homes and generating new group opportunities, all of which involves encouragement, equipping and follow-up.

He will also strategize for growth among our Small Groups and have the oversight (along with his Elder) over the basic and complex issues that arise out of such groups.

Small Group Ministry will be the lifeblood of this church – where the actual Member ministry takes place. My hope is that 60-75% of our Membership will be involved in a Small Group – and my guess is that its greatest expansion will come from among our new Members as we make it a renewed part of our ministry thrust.

We have a potential Intern in Jeremy Alder and I would like for us to pursue getting Jeremy as soon as possible. He has a heart for ministry and it seems as though the Lord is calling him to eventually cross over into full time church work. If any ministry needs an internship this is it with all the planning, follow-up and contact involved.

I have also told Dwayne that he needs to pursue the completion of his ministerial studies – that we desire for him to be ordained. This is his heart, and it is time for this to happen.

– **Rich Staroneck – Director of Culture and Arts**

This position would be in conjunction with Rich's other responsibilities. He will oversee all offerings to the community and will work in conjunction with a Team of volunteers who are committed to bringing a strong cultural presence to the church. He will be our 'cultural barometer' – a 'guru' of sorts – and he will help us by challenging us to wrestle with what we do in terms of relevance and effectiveness when it comes to reaching the culture.

He will be responsible for orchestrating the calendar year with regards to cultural offerings such as concerts, art exhibits, performances, etc.

We took a risk and have already scheduled a Jazz Concert in our parking lot for the fall – we are calling it *Jazz Under the Stars* – two groups will come and the community will be invited. Our hope is to have a Team of Members who will provide Hot Cider/Hot Chocolate as people come and sit on blankets and hear such music.

– **Scott Simmons – Minister of World Missions**

During the interim in the void of a permanent Sr. Pastor Scott became a generalist of sorts at Chapelgate. But his heart is in Missions and I want him to throw himself into this. His responsibilities will involve the following:

- Leadership of the Missions Festival – I would like to see the Missions Festival change a bit at Chapelgate. My observation is that it is a bit heavy on its offerings to the Congregation – a difficult week for people to completely invest in.
- Leadership in assessing and determining Missionaries, Missions Organizations and Missions Directions for Chapelgate
- Oversight of Short Term Missions Trips and Family Missions Trips

- Coordination with Mike Rallo in City Missions Projects
- Coordination with Youth Pastors on Youth Missions Trips

Scott will also be taking over the Pastoral leadership of CCF. He will lead them in vision and will pastor this group with the hope of bringing growth, vision and continued ministries of service through these people.

Until we hire a Minister of Spiritual Formation/Discipleship I would want Scott to work directly with the Education Committee and help in the leading, integration and planning of the educational dimensions of our church ministry.

New/Future Positions

- **Minister of Ministry Development and Outreach**

This pastor will be the closest thing to an Executive Pastor that we will have. My hope is that we get him soon. He will ‘make ministries work,’ as the Staff and leaders, including me will go to him for the practical development of our ministries. He will work with the Sr. Pastor and Session in developing future strategies that are only ‘sketches’ in the mind of the Sr. Pastor.

- He will also oversee the Outreach ministries of the church – strategizing and forming Teams that will enable us to reach out to the broader community with information about Chapelgate. This is something I feel we desperately need right now. We are not well known for who we are and want to be to the surrounding community. If we were a church plant we would be doing this aggressively. We need to act with the same urgency.
- He will work closely with the Session-Diaconate Future Development Team and with the Financial/Stewardship Teams.
- He will also head up the Teams of ministries that do the Visitor follow-up. Follow up would be on two levels:
 1. Rapid Visit Teams – These Teams would contact the people who visit Chapelgate and leave their contact information on the Sunday they visit. Their goal is to NOT get into the home. In fact they may not even see the Visitors. Their job will be to bring a gift of bread or cookies or a plant and leave it at the home of the Visitor with some kind of card that lets the Visitor know who was there and that they may contact them with any questions regarding Chapelgate, or any needs.
 2. Visitor Calls – This Team would make actual phone calls during the week. If anything were to arise out of these calls this pastor would follow up.

- This pastor would also head up our Assimilation Process in which a Team of people meets with potential New Members and begins to indoctrinate them into the church culture. They will also assist in figuring out where they are in the Faith in order to plug them into the best ministries suited to disciple them along. Once these people become New Members and join the church this Team would walk them through the process of involvement and then do some kind of assessment after they have been Members for six months and a year.

I would want someone with great energy and ‘ambition’ for us to reach out to the community. This could be an established minister or a young man out of seminary, but if so the duties listed would need to be divided and spread out over another position – possibly with some of the current positions.

– **Minister/Director of Pastoral Care**

We need someone who will oversee our Pastoral Care Ministries. Right now we are adept at responding to information but not so strong at ongoing pastoral care – we have a good system of finding out what is happening – this is good – but we need a better system of networking people to handle the needs. This man would oversee all the pastoral care ministries of the church: the hospital visits, the marriage and funeral procedures, the crisis response, the network of care between the various agencies of the church, etc. All the care agencies and activities would be in his scope.

This Minister/Director would also minister directly to our Seniors (Prime Ministers). He would be responsible for visiting and contacting them and for connecting the Deacons to their needs.

This person would work with the Deacons and with Ian Chisholm and anyone else directly involved with our Membership. He would be the one who keeps his finger on the pulse of the Membership, pastorally.

He would work with the Elders in their shepherding ministry and would forge a Team of lay people who are committed to contacting Members who have not been in church for a few weeks.

This would need to be a man who loves the Church and who loves people. He would need to be willing to visit homes and hospitals at any given hour.

– **Minister of Spiritual Formation/Discipleship**

“The common life is a means of Christian formation and discipleship for faithful expression of the church’s participation in

God's story of the renewal of all things in Christ. It is this common life – how people care for one another, generate new patterns of relationship, and take seriously the call to serve their neighbors – that sets the church apart, even more than its building, its programs, its pastor, or its preaching... Biblically defined, the church is not merely a collection of individuals but a social body built around Christ that focuses on God's reign. The many images of the church in Scripture – such as the body of Christ, the people of God, the household of the Spirit – are all pictures of community.”

Mark R. Gornik, To Live in Peace, p.74.

One of the things that often happens in a larger church is that the discipleship of the church becomes confused with the need for fellowship. People are hungry for fellowship and they are hungry for God's Word – but often the two become diametrically opposed to one another in a single setting. For instance, Sunday School classes often become 45-minute struggles between actual learning and social mixing – in the crossfire neither is served well while both are vital to body life.

What I would propose is that we become more intentional in our Spiritual Formation. We need it and people are hungry to grow and learn. Sunday Worship centers more around the proclamation of the Word – the sermon is not a Bible Study – it is a moment – the pronouncement and challenge of the Gospel – the announcement that the Kingdom of God has come.

We need someone who has a great passion for teaching the Scriptures and a good grip on the Gospel so as to integrate well the whole matter of faith and life. My suggestion is that we get someone like Richard Pratt from RTS, Orlando.

Sunday mornings would be for something more along the lines of the old 'FLOCKS' with some mechanism in protecting against their becoming too ingrown within themselves – this can be done. If a group wants to study the Confession, they can. If we need a class for Young Parents, we can do it. If we want to teach a class on Stewardship of finances, we have that. We need to be able to offer something that will meet such needs without having to make it Bible Study-ish for the sake of feeling good that we have some sort of study. It would be good to teach World Harvest's *Gospel Transformations*.

Spiritual Life Weekends

I want us to have a Spiritual Life Conference each year under the leadership of the Minister of Spiritual Formation/Discipleship. While Chapelgate once had Reformed Theology Conferences what our people need today is weekends devoted to growing in a deeper understanding of the Gospel and how to apply that to daily life.

We could have people like Steve Smallman, Sr., Scotty Smith, Ray Cortese, Sandy Wilson, Fred Harrell, to name a few, who would come to challenge and encourage us in the Journey.

Seminary

This individual would work in conjunction with Scott Simmons and Mike Rallo and together they would help us to start this new institution out of Chapelgate. Scott's heart for education of ministers is grand. Mike would help us to keep a soft heart for the City and for the broken in our training. People like Thurman Williams at Newsong would make for tremendous resources, as they would share in the work.

– **Director of Women's Ministries**

As mentioned above I am thoroughly impressed with our WIC program. The women at Chapelgate are thriving and are filled with a desire to serve this church and to serve the community. They desire a Director of Women's Ministries, and I agree that this would be a great addition within the next year.

This woman would train the WIC Officers, mentor and challenge our women in their vision/mission, and serve in a ministering role in the church to our ladies in a way that no man can. She would be the conduit between the Session and the WIC and would serve alongside of the Education Committee of the Church, championing our Women and keeping sensitive our Leadership to them, their needs and their voice. This may begin as a Part Time position.

– **Counseling Ministries**

Right now Mike Rallo and Rich Starsonneck do the majority of our counseling – and they are quite adept at this. Steve Dallwig is entering into the fray as well as he takes on Family Ministry. But we need a Ministry that is specifically for this purpose so that they can more proficiently do what they have been called to do. This can be the most draining Staff position. Obviously all of us in ministry engage in some form of counseling – this is a given. But there is an ongoing and strenuous dimension to such a ministry that demands more than the incidental counseling we ministers offer.

I see a ministry that would be regional as well as local in which our Members would be cared for by a Team of counselors who schedule them as they would in the public arena, except this is from a Christian model. They would oversee 'groups' and seminars throughout the calendar year.

This Team would also be availed to the larger community in which they might charge a nominal fee to help with the overhead to the church. It would be preferred to have someone who could also oversee interns who would be working toward their hours and who would essentially pay us (not with money but with hours) for the service.

Mike is involved with a Counseling Group called Cornerstone (or something like that). I would be open to our housing that Group to be the Counseling arm of the church where they would provide free counseling to our Members (or at a vastly cut rate) and we would provide office space in some kind of co-opt agreement.

Eventually it would be great if we could get a separate place for the Center – whether a home on the adjacent property (I believe that Christ Presbyterian Church in Brentwood, TN – the Nashville area – has this kind of thing), or a separate smaller structure on our present property. This would lend to confidentiality for the people receiving the counseling.

– **Director of College Ministries**

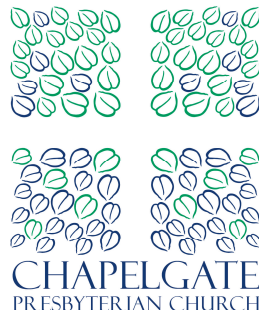
Katherine and I are offering ourselves to this group. We believe there is a wealth of untapped talent and potential among these Young People and God has always given us a heart for such groups. We will probably meet twice a month at our home unless it grows beyond that. Once a month we will offer pure dinner and fellowship. The other will be some kind of study or discussion group.

I have met with Rob and Faye Weaver (along with Steve Dallwig) who will continue to be involved with the College kids as well as Aaron and Melissa Talbot who are tremendous volunteer leaders who connect well with the Students.

In the fall we will be offering a College Students Sunday School Class – the Christian Education Committee is working on securing Teachers for this now.

Eventually I would like for us to hire a Director of Student Ministries who will oversee everything that spans Student involvement at Chapelgate, from Middle School to College.

Financially there are some important shifts we can make internally, as well as to bring the budget up to speed in this area as we approach the New Year.



Church Plant

I believe we need two key facilities at Chapelgate: *A Youth Center and a Worship Center*. Eventually we will need an educational wing that either houses Chapelgate Christian Academy classrooms, or one that frees up more space in the present facility for the Academy.

The Worship Center needs to be multi-purpose and the Youth Center needs visionary placement.

Youth Center

I believe we need a Youth Center. What I foresee is a structure that has a Starbucks-type interior with artwork on display, exposed ventilation above (ala Don Pablo's Restaurant), subtle lighting (as well as the ability to completely light up the Center), open space for gathering, comfortable seating, four-top tables, state-of-the arts sound, wireless access, and flat screens for movies/discussion groups, etc.

Why this Center? Because right now our Young People meet in two rooms that really afford little or no growth. In fact they are wedged between other non-Youth-type spaces – the school computer lab, the school trophy case, etc. It doesn't 'feel' like a space that would induce ownership among our Young People. Additionally it is a 'no-win' situation for all the Young People. Consider this – for the Chapelgate Students, in order for them to go to Youth Group, they have to go to school! It should not be surprising that the Chapelgate Students do not make up a significant constituency of our Youth Group. And then on the other side, for the non-Chapelgate Students they have to go to someone else's school for Youth Group!

Identity is crucial for a Youth Ministry and it seems to me that our Young People could really flourish within the church and to the Community Youth by having such a space.

But this is only part of how this would serve. Guys like Mike Rallo and Rich Staroneck could meet the Community out in the Community and form solid bridges to Christ and the church through this medium. I/we can see evenings where people gather to discuss a recent film, or a book or to hear some live music while they gather.

Our Youth need their own Center – a separate space that oozes 'identity' for them. I recommend that we construct a freestanding two-story structure on the property – one that demonstrates a bit of independence but also one that is obviously associated with the church. I believe that if we do this our Youth Ministry will be taken to another sphere of ministry in this community – and I believe this is needed for the present culture.

Worship Center

I say ‘Worship Center’ because it seems to me that if we can build a more versatile building that we worship in we can have something that is more practical than a once-per-week facility. It is God who turns rooms into sanctuaries and so if what we build is in excellence it will be both beautiful and usable and not a symbol of excess.

This Worship Center should be magnificent externally and practical internally. The sound and visual equipment should be state of the art and it should be designed to hold up to 1500 people. We should be able to worship powerfully on Sundays and to host a major concert or dramatic performance on a weekday evening.

There should be space built into the facility for offices and some classrooms, or some kind of small college-like lecture room.

Building Committee

My thinking is that we should form a Building Committee as soon as possible to get the wheels turning on the process. It will probably take about six months to design each building and then some time to raise the funds and build – but I hope we can get on the Youth Center as soon as possible.

Chapelgate Christian Academy

CCA is building a new field and our future construction can figure in as the drainage structure for the field could be underwritten to a great degree in our engineering of the water retention requirements. I think we need to visit this with a serious desire to help in the project.

Improvements

- We need to change the ‘Look’ of the Facility on Sunday – I have had several people tell me that they feel they are worshipping at a school – and in reality they are. But we can do something about this. We can have a lovely lobby with works of Art. We can have a coffee/danish/fruit stand in the lobby. We can hang banners in the gym (I am resisting the term ‘sanctinadium!’). There are things we can do – inexpensive things – to have a different ‘face’ on Sundays – and we need to. I address this to some extent under, Church Plant.

Becky Weaver has offered to help with this and has found that we can do some simple, inexpensive things to improve the ‘look.’ Our foyer can be a more effective place of welcome and information. But the current arrangement needs to be changed and updated.

This area needs to be much more engaging and inviting on Sundays. Gail Head is going to continue to develop how this area can be used for fellowship during this time.

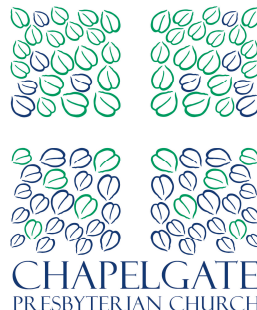
I want our Bulletin Boards replaced by beautiful walls with art and some form of electronic communication in the lobby.

Estimated Cost: \$50-75,000 – I believe we can raise this outside the General Fund.

Missional Commitments

I want to propose that we commit ourselves to some things regarding any future construction we do at Chapelgate – that being that whenever we expand we tithe on the expansion. One of the things I have noticed in the evangelical world is a self-centeredness among large churches when it comes to expansion. One church, the Seven Rivers Church in Lecanto, Florida, is among the few that tithes on its expansion. Ray Cortese, the preacher at my installation at Chapelgate is the pastor at Seven Rivers.

My proposal is that we tithe and equally disperse the tithe among the Ukraine, Mexico, Church Planting and Chapelgate Christian, and use some of that money to help our Baltimore churches so as to protect against any unwarranted insulation from the needs of the City.



Conclusion: We have an opportunity – a wonderful one. One denominational leader told me that ‘Chapelgate has the potential to become a national church but it keeps getting in the way of its own potential.’ What we have before us is grand and it is on the horizon of this church if we are willing to step outside ourselves and many of our well-intentioned but time worn ways. I honestly believe that Chapelgate has to change or that it will slowly die. It will follow the path of churches that have gone before – churches that lived in the past, dressed in the past and yet were unwilling to minister in ‘the day.’

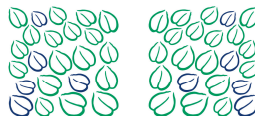
And we know that none will come about apart from the presence, power and work of God’s Spirit upon this Body (Zechariah 4:6). So from the outset, let’s pray that God visits this church with Renewal in a powerful way – as never before – not that we may boast of ourselves, but of Him whose church it is. Let’s come before the Lord – humbly and with worshipful and repentant hearts – and plead that He use this church as a powerful instrument of His Grace – here in the immediate Community – to the City of Baltimore and other key Cities – and to the World. Let us pray for Renewal at Chapelgate. My hope is for a Gospel-centered ministry that bears the fruit of a Renewed church community and culture.

“In prayer we make use of the privilege which is ours in being seated with Christ in heavenly places and thus join in his counsels and his ruling power. Thus the prayers of believers are a terror to the powers of evil, not simply because of the judgment they bring down on the works of darkness, but because they turn bewildered saints into knowledgeable opponents.”

Richard F. Lovelace, Dynamics of Spiritual Life, p. 157.

Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! “Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?” “Who has ever given to God, that God should repay him?” For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.

Romans 11:33-36



CHAPEL GATE
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Addendum 1

Consideration of Deaconesses at Chapelgate

In Acts 16:1-2 Paul writes, “I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant of the church in Cenchrea. I ask you to receive her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints and to give her any help she may need from you, for she has been a great help to many people, including me.”

That word for ‘servant’ in verse one is the Greek word, *diakonon* – which is normally translated, ‘deacon.’ The word does mean ‘servant’ or ‘minister.’

What interests me is the respect Paul ‘commends’ to the Church for her to receive given her track record of help to many.

It seems to me that we should do what Paul has commended. We need to recognize the women at Chapelgate who serve Christ by serving people in such a role. We need the office of Deaconess.

This is not without precedence. Redeemer Church in NYC has Deaconesses, and from what I understood Chapelgate once had Deaconesses. I believe this is biblical and that our church will be richly blessed through this ministry.

Structurally we would have them meet with the Deacons, as they would serve under the authority of the Diaconate. This would be an unordained office, as Paul only speaks to men in Timothy and Titus when it comes to the laying on of hands. We would install them in church on the day that we ordain and install the men to the offices of Elder and Deacon.

Addendum 2

Session Structure

Personally I have no problem with a large Session. By most standards our Session is large, but this is not a big deal to me. But what I do struggle with is meetings in which the size of our Session figures in to too much discussion on matters that could be handled on a much smaller scale.

If you look at Sessions at churches such as Redeemer and Perimeter you find that there are either smaller Sessions **or** we operate a larger Session in a different way. I believe that George Baker and I discussed this some in the pastoral search process.

The fact is that we don't need to discuss administrative issues to the extent that we do as an entire Session. If you read the book of Acts, the administrative oversight of the church was the least important thing the Elders did. In fact, if you read closely you will find that they exercised rule, but that the Deacons ran the church in Jerusalem in order that the Elders could concentrate on the spread of the Gospel. This is my desire for our Session. I want for us to dwell on the spread of the Gospel. This is the exciting stuff!

Here is what I would suggest as a start:

1. **We expand the Administrative Committee to 10 Elders** – This Committee would process every administrative detail that we need to address as a Session. We would operate on complete trust with these guys. I will serve ex officio and together we will deal with the nuts and bolts of the church. This will be a revolving Committee so as to protect against any guys either getting too insulated from ministry and to protect against anyone feeling as though a small group of guys is too powerful on the Session. Any Elder who does not desire to serve will not serve in this capacity, otherwise all will be considered. This will be a two-year stint. The Administrative Committee Report will be given as information to the Elders each month. As with the current Administrative Committee the Chairman of the Deacons will serve in this format as well.
2. **We relegate the Session Meetings to Pure Ministry and Gospel Spread** – In our Session meetings we will spend our energy completely on who we are, what we are doing and whether or not we are getting it done. We will pray for our people, have Ministry Leaders come to the meetings and fill us in on how the Gospel is at work in their areas of ministry and we will discuss the spiritual health of our church. These may be meetings that happen at the church or Katherine and I may open up our home to them.
3. **We Spin off Committees that will Report to the Administrative Committee** – such as the Ministry Development Team, the Building Committee, etc. The Administrative Committee report will be extensive and will be entered into the Session records.

What will this accomplish?

- It will spare us unneeded discussion that all but muffles most of the guys in our Session meetings. To be honest, most of our guys don't speak in Session meetings. My guess is that this is due to the content matter of the meetings. We tend to spend a lot of time on issues that, if there is trust, are unnecessary to discuss in an open forum.
- It will expand the ministry at Chapelgate. Frankly I want to get fired up with you about why we are here, not what being here entails administratively – and I think we all feel this way. The more guys who get fired up, the more ministries this church will spawn.
- It will expand Leadership involvement. As guys buy into the fact that our meetings are all about the work – the expansion of the Gospel – they will open up – of this I am confident.

