

McAllister Memorial Presbyterian Church Mission Study & Ministry Plan

Presented to the Session
November 19, 2017



The Mission Study Task Force

The Mission Study Task Force was selected in September by the Session to collect data and discuss ideas for mission and vision statements by conducting sensing sessions with a demographic cross section of the congregation. Three members were called to serve: Betsy Caul, Bobby J. Rice, and Paul D. Linkenhoker. The Interim Pastor, Reverend Patrick Pettitt, provided resources, guidance and support to the committee.

Prior to the identification of the task force, meetings began informally at the beginning of 2017 with reviews of the process and the planning of Bible Study events.

The history of the congregation was compiled as was a list of past and present activities.

Some of the **possible** goals discussed include: comparing the perceived identity of the church with the measureable performance, creating a new connection with the church community, identifying successes and disappointments, and reviewing the outreach programs of the church.

The demographics of the church and community were then examined with particular attention to the practical boundaries of the community around the church.

The Task Force organized two Fellowship Luncheons which featured 'hands-on' Bible Studies facilitated by Interim Pastor *Patrick Pettitt*; two other Bible studies were undertaken during the Sunday school hour. The Task Forces then worked with the Interim Pastor to conduct four sensing sessions involving two adult Sunday school classes, a teen youth class, and an upper elementary class. A final session was conducted with the adult choir and church members not involved in the Sunday school program. After reviewing the data collected, the Task Force then addressed the Vision and Mission Statements and formulated a Mission Study report. The report appears in the following pages and was approved by the Session at a called meeting on _____.

McAllister Memorial Presbyterian Church
900 N. Alleghany Avenue
Covington, VA 24426

2017 Mission Study

In conducting a mission study, it is necessary to determine the mission of the church and the vision which will guide us to the accomplishment of that mission. We must first understand the specific meaning of those terms as they apply to the circumstances which brought about the establishment of our church and the congregation it currently serves. It is apparent that the best definitions found in an internet search are those listed below.

Mission – calling, a specific task with which a person or group of people is charged

Vision – a thought, concept, or object formed by the imagination

We further understand that as Presbyterians, a denomination of Christian beliefs, we must look to the scriptures and the Gospel of Jesus Christ for the necessary guidance to create mission and vision statements. It is our determination that the will of God is best described by Jesus Christ in the passage below, delivered to the disciples before his departure from the earth.

The Great Commission – Matthew 28:16-20: “. . . Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. . . .”

Within the context of today’s culture, our location in God’s creation, and the understanding of God’s Word, we believe that the words recorded in Matthew 28, which have guided this study, are best expressed in the statements which follow.

Our Mission – Make disciples of all who worship and attend McAllister Memorial Presbyterian Church, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and sending them to spread the Word throughout the community and the world beyond.

Our Vision – Lead people to obey the Word of God and teach the Gospel of Jesus Christ, through worship, teaching, stewardship and service.

Our vision is the plan we have formed in our imagination to lead us in our efforts to accomplish our mission. It is further expressed by the detailed explanation of the key tasks identified in our vision statement.

Worship – Through services of praise, both traditional and contemporary, the ministry of the church is to teach the Gospel, minister to the youth, care for the needy and reach out to the community and world beyond. Reach across interdenominational differences to

participate in joint services during Holy seasons and during times of celebration, revival, sorrow and need.

Teaching – Through programs in Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, Youth Groups, Circles, Prayer Services, Music and Bible Study, the church further teaches the Word of God and the Gospel of Jesus Christ, equipping Christians to be servants of all.

Stewardship – To meet our mission, the congregation must be inspired to lead by being good stewards of time, talents and resources, knowing that all we have comes from God's blessings.

Service – Programs of benevolence and care provide opportunities for service through a food pantry, clothes closet, Presbyterian Mission Week, Men of Mission, Community Lenten Lunches, COPE, Christmas Cheer Program, Bereavement Meals, Presbyterian Missionary Support, Sunnyside Links of Love, Blanket Sunday, 2 Cents a Meal, Birthday Offering, Thank Offering, Joy Gift, After Prom Parties, sponsorship of scouting programs, support for the Alleghany Highlands Chorale, and support for those members involved in the numerous causes and activities designed to lead to the cure and eradication of terminal disease and illness.

Church History

The story of McAllister Memorial Church begins at the end of the nineteenth century, when industry began to transform the small town of Covington, Virginia. Situated on the banks of the Jackson River, in 1900 Covington became home to a West Virginia Pulp and Paper Company facility, constructed on land owned by A. Adams McAllister, who also lent his name to the hill across the river, where company housing was constructed. In time, First Presbyterian Church (organized 1819) responded to this population growth in the northern outskirts of town with a motion to ‘build and equip a Sunday School room on McAllister Hill.’ In June of 1918, the McAllister Memorial Chapel was opened; within a year, McAllister Memorial Presbyterian Church was organized by the Presbytery of Montgomery (PCUS) with the Rev. W.H. Foard installed as organizing pastor.

Beginning with some thirty-four members, McAllister Memorial experienced steady increases in membership, even in the midst of the Great Depression. After sharing pastors with the Falling Springs church for several years, the Rev. Leslie Patterson was called in 1936, ushering in a time of phenomenal church growth; membership increased from 250 in 1936 to 600 in 1939. In 1937, a building program doubled the size of the physical plant and included a new sanctuary. The 1940s were a time of transition; after pastorates cut short by circumstance and war, the Rev. Clyde Walsh was called to shepherd the congregation from late 1942 until 1946. He was followed by the Reverend William Manson.

The Rev. James C. Clark, D.D. would serve McAllister throughout the 1950s – a time of continued growth, with building improvement and expansion of particular note. Dr. Clark was the pastor in 1950 when the church petitioned the Circuit Court of Alleghany County to have that portion of Cedar Street extending beyond Alleghany Avenue to the old Covington-Warm Springs Turnpike (Riverside St.) vacated and transferred to the trustees of the church. The street had never been developed and it was in reality in use by the church.

On the 9th day of October, 1957, the trustees were authorized to borrow \$40,000 from the Citizens National Bank and \$30,000 from the Covington National for the purpose of erecting a new church building and sanctuary. Another resolution on the 10th of September, 1958, increased the authorization to allow a sum of \$50,000 to be borrowed from the Citizens National Bank and \$30,000 from the Covington National Bank.

In 1961, Jerold D. Shetler was ordained and installed as pastor, and during his five-year pastorate youth participation increased considerably; in 1963, the Youth Fellowship gathered food and clothing, distributing it to families in the neighborhood on Christmas Eve. Thus was born the ‘Christmas Cheer’ program, which has continued to grow, both in the number of those served and in its significance to the church and the community. The Reverend James Hoge Smith, Jr. then served as pastor from 1965-1969, when McAllister welcomed the Reverend Harold Moffitt. Reverend Moffitt would serve as pastor until his retirement in 1992.

As far back as the early 1960s, music had become a significant engine of identity and outreach. Under director Frances Rupert, the music program blossomed; multiple choirs of children, teens and adults not only enhanced worship, but also shared their music and message in church programs and around the community. Both talented and charismatic, Ms. Rupert was evangelistic in her recruiting. Going into the community around the church, she encouraged and accepted all who would come, and would see to much more than their artistic needs. She was also instrumental in the installation of the pipe organ and grand piano in the sanctuary. McAllister found an identity and reputation in this ministry.

By the mid 1970s, the 1937 structure which was converted for use as a fellowship hall and for Sunday school space was aging and inadequate. In 1978, it was replaced with a two-story addition containing a large fellowship hall, commercial, and Sunday rooms.

The 1980s brought another crucial element in the congregation's identity: the COPE Food Pantry. In response to a devastating fire at the Hercules Fiber plant in 1980, local churches organized *Churches Overcoming Problem with the Economy - COPE*. Beginning with financial support and assistance, COPE's ministry expanded in 1983 with the opening of the Food Pantry, which operates from McAllister, as does an affiliated Clothes Closet.

By the early 1990s, the music program was under the direction of Susan Parker Potter, a lifelong member and Miss Virginia 1984. Talented and vivacious, her ten-year battle with breast cancer brought the congregation together in love and support, but also saw the quality and significance of the music program diminish; she passed away in 2013.

Dr. Earl Bland was called as pastor in 1993; after a difficult pastorate, McAllister called the Reverend Michael Fleenor, who served the McAllister congregation from December, 2001, until his retirement in May, 2016.

Throughout its history, McAllister has been a family oriented congregation, providing weekly Sunday school, Vacation Bible School, Youth Group, and intergenerational activities focused on fun and fellowship. The church has a long history of sponsoring and supporting both boy scout and girl programs. Beginning in 2007, the church has employed various Youth Christian Education Directors to oversee programs, activities, and youth participation in worship. In 2015, McAllister member Tarie Warlitner was hired as Youth Christian Education Director.

While still an active intergenerational congregation, congregational demographics have begun to skew older. In addition, changing patterns in church membership and the culture have led to fundamental questions about McAllister's mission and ministry in the twenty-first century.

Relationship to Presbytery

McAllister Memorial has been on the frontier of the Presbytery of the Peaks since its creation in 1989. Being somewhat removed from the center of the Presbytery’s activities and oversight, participation in Presbytery has been sporadic. Theologically, McAllister presents itself as a predominantly conservative congregation, which harbors some reservations about the direction of the Presbyterian Church, (U.S.A.). The church maintains collegial relations with the other local Presbyterian congregations, cooperating on various service oriented activities.

Membership Roll and Demographics

The current active membership is 289, 25% of which is under the age of 26. 22% of the congregation is over the age of 65.

Age Distribution of Members

Age	Tally	Male	Female
25 & under	72	28	44
26-45	58	25	33
46-55	47	15	32
58-65	49	13	36
Over 65	63	16	47
Totals	289	97	192

The Ten Year trends (as of 2013) are as follows.

McAllister Memorial, Covington, VA
 Synod: Mid-Atlantic
 Presbytery: Peaks
 PIN# 22971

Year	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Members	436	426	413	404	393	382	373	356	347	335	319
Deacons	286	285	284	287	283	288	289	247	243	233	224
Prof. Faith Comm. 17	6	8	1	5	10	1	5	8	6	1	1
Prof. Faith Comm. 18	1	0	2	2	7	0	5	0	0	4	4
Prof. Faith Comm.	0	0	3	7	12	1	7	0	0	5	2
Certificate Gains	0	0	0	4	3	5	2	0	2	0	0
Other Gains	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Gains	0	0	0	16	15	6	9	0	2	0	0
Certificate Losses	1	1	4	7	1	7	1	3	0	2	0
Deaths	1	18	0	0	14	0	10	8	16	10	1
Other Losses	0	0	10	6	0	12	7	11	7	5	6
Total Losses	2	19	14	13	15	19	18	22	24	17	17
Net Change	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1
Adult Baptisms	1	0	0	2	2	0	2	0	0	2	2
Christian Education Enrollment	192	185	179	167	155	123	152	144	132	124	125
Baptisms	63	50	47	44	68	76	83	88			
Baptisms & Members	5	0	15	16	15	20	19	21	20	19	21
Volunteers	566	481	479	474	490	478	475	459	357	344	346
Worship Attendance	135	137	136	153	149	143	146	149	145	133	133
Contributions (\$)	222,703	224,081	22,930	207,113	189,060	196,238	201,370	208,616	205,201	226,208	227,600
Building (\$)	4,245							0	0	5,049	25,643
Requests (\$)								0	0	0	33,900
Investment Income (%)	6.610	5.270	4.577	5.075			5.252	9.217	5,190	1,000	0
Other Income (\$)							10,000	0	0	0	0
Love Programs (\$)	151,676	171,600	184,553	193,640	204,500	203,910	245,667	209,639	204,635	203,864	203,311
Love Mission (\$)	27,151	26,315	25,982	27,087	27,539	30,279	5,118	12,648	7,691	18,500	4,700
Capital Expenditures (\$)	12,984	12,489	14,996	3,210	2,700	5,200	4,990	1,000	4,200	9,410	125,462
Investment Expenditures (\$)	10,738	15,080					6,380	0	0	0	0
Per Capita Apportionment (\$)	15,241	15,281	16,055	16,050	16,939	16,800		0	0	32,000	6,200
Volunteer Mission (%)	12,441	12,901	4,200	2,200	4,200	4,200	21,124	19,294	11,624	1,275	2,800
Other Mission (\$)	7,591	8,406	11,067	11,715	12,768	11,643	24,366	8,767	8,795	550	5,367
Per Member Contributions (\$)	\$16.47	\$28.17	\$55.01	\$96.07	-\$7.82	\$13.97	\$61.11	\$96.85	\$69.16	\$86.30	\$11.88
Contrib. Per Worship Attendance (\$)	1,426.85	1,433.86	146.85	1,209.89	1,268.46	1,372.99	1,424.04	1,200.83	1,487.29	1,675.25	1,724.24

Note 1: Membership numbers and other statistics for congregations affiliated with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and one or more other denominations reflect only portions of the actual totals.
 Note 2: Percentages blank when no data are reported.
 Prepared by: Research Services, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Community Demographic

As of the census of 2000, there were 6,303 people, 2,835 households, and 1,740 families residing in the city. The population density was 1,111.3 people per square mile (429.2/km²). The racial makeup of the city was 84.06% White, 13.14% Black or African American, 0.35% Native American, 0.65% Asian, 0.02% Pacific Islander, 0.21% from other races, and 1.59% from two or more races. 0.63% of the population was Hispanic or Latino of any race.

There were 3,195 housing units at an average density of 563.3 per square mile (217.6/km²). There were 2,835 households out of which 23.7% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 44.9% were married couples living together, 12.5% had a female householder with no husband present, and 38.6% were non-families. Of all households 34.0% were made up of individuals and 16.4% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.22 and the average family size was 2.83.

In the city, the population was spread out with 21.5% under the age of 18, 8.2% from 18 to 24, 26.3% from 25 to 44, 23.9% from 45 to 64, and 20.2% who were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 40 years. For every 100 females there were 91.6 males. For every 100 females age 18 and over, there were 86.1 males.

The median income for a household in the city was \$30,325, and the median income for a family was \$36,640. Males had a median income of \$30,755 versus \$20,316 for females. The per capita income for the city was \$16,758. About 10.7% of families and 12.9% of the population were below the poverty line, including 16.1% of those under age 18 and 9.1% of those age 65 or over.

Community Assessment

The first settlers came to this area in the spring of 1746. Peter Wight established a homestead at the site of present day Covington on the banks of the Dunlap Creek and Jackson River. That area now contains the Historic Rosedale Community and the WestRock paper mill.

Joseph Carpenter settled on a tract of land where the Potts Creek flows into the Jackson River in what is now known as Idlewilde. Carpenter descendents still live on the original site of Carpenter's homestead.

Covington was organized in 1817-1818 by Dr. James Merry and his brother Samuel. It was named in honor of General Leonard Covington, a friend of Thomas Jefferson and hero of the War of 1812 who was killed in battle near Williamsburg, Canada. Covington grew slowly throughout most of the nineteenth century, functioning primarily as an agricultural community in an area where the terrain made agriculture a difficult endeavor.

The first industry to come to the area was iron production; the easy availability of coal, iron ore and limestone, as well as both rail and water transportation spurred the growth of iron furnaces, coke works and machine shops. By the 1890s, the town supported a tannery, a planing mill, two flour mills, two brick yards and the Alleghany Pin and Bracket Company. In 1899, the West Virginia Paper and Pulp Company (Westvaco, now WestRock) purchased land and built a paper mill on the west bank of the Jackson river. The plant has grown to be one of the largest of its kind in the world and is the dominant man-made feature in Covington.

Between 1890 and 1900, the population increased fourfold, from 704 to 2,950. Covington became the fourth largest freight paying station on the Chesapeake & Ohio Road, after Chicago, Cincinnati and Richmond; in those days, the C&O ran fourteen passenger trains daily through town. In 1902, the Town of Covington was designated by the General Assembly to be the county seat of Alleghany County. Other industries moved into the area, including plastics and synthetic fiber production. After several expansions of the corporate limits, the Town of Covington became an Independent City in 1952. The population reached its peak in 1960, with 11,062 living in the city. Since then, declines have resulted primarily from the loss of manufacturing jobs exemplified by a fire at the Hercules polypropylene fibers plant in June 1980, which caused \$23 million in damage and significant worker layoffs. It was at this time that C.O.P.E. (Christians Overcoming Problems of the Economy) was organized by local churches. With an estimated census population of 5,961 (2010), and a 2015 estimated population of 5,658, Covington is now the third-least populous city in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Covington covers 5.7 square miles at the confluence of Jackson River and Dunlap Creek. Surrounded by the mountains of Alleghany County, of which it is the seat. Road access to the area is provided by Interstate 64 and US Route 60(east-west) and US Route 220 (north-south). In addition, rail passenger service is provided at the Amtrak station in Clifton Forge, twelve miles east of the city.

The city has a council–manager government. Protection is provided by the Covington Police Department, the Covington Volunteer Fire Department, and the Covington Rescue Squad. The latter was organized in 1933 and is the third oldest volunteer rescue squad in Virginia. The City shares a sheriff, court system, department of Social Services, Health Department and Regional Library with Alleghany County.

The Covington City Public Schools operate Edgemont Primary School (pre-kindergarten through third grade); Jeter Watson Middle School (grades four through seven), and Covington High School (grades eight through twelve). Alleghany County Public Schools operate three Elementary Schools (grades kindergarten through fifth grade), the Clifton Middle School (grades six through eight), and Alleghany High School (grades nine through twelve). In addition, the area is served by the Jackson River State Governor's School, the Jackson River Technical Center and the Dabney S. Lancaster Community College.

The city's media and news needs are served by *The Virginian Review*, which has been continuously published since August 10, 1914, and by AM radio station WKEY. There are also on-line newscasts provided by the Two Virginias Media Group operated by Alan Howard and the Alleghany Journal operated by Jerry Clark. The morning edition of *The Roanoke Times* is also available by daily delivery.

Covington's economy is dictated in large part by the WestRock paper mill, which produces bleached paper and paperboard for packaging. In operation since 1900, the facility is arguably the largest in the country, employing some 1300 workers, mostly from Covington and Alleghany County, while contracting with other local businesses for various services.

Covington and the surrounding area of Alleghany County are known for the low cost of their housing markets and close proximity to Lexington and Roanoke, Virginia, and Lewisburg West Virginia. Both the Omni Homestead Resort in Hot Springs Virginia, and The Greenbrier in White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia, are within a thirty minute drive.

Ministry Area

The ministry area for McAllister Memorial Church is defined in two ways. The community in which the church is located can be described by a ½ mile radius, which takes in the neighborhoods of *McAllister Hill*, *Dry Run*, *Rivermont* and *High Acres Village*, a trailer park. These neighborhoods were once home to working class families (primarily employed by the paper mill), many of whom owned their homes. They could shop in neighborhood stores and businesses, and send their children to a neighborhood school. They are now transitional neighborhoods, with many homes now listed as rental properties. The stores are now closed and the Rivermont Elementary School closed in 1988.

Mission/Outreach Programs

- **COPE.** Christians Overcoming Problems with the Economy is a community organization which provides financial assistance to community members in need. COPE operates a **Food Pantry**, which is housed at McAllister Memorial, providing both donated and FDA food purchased from *Feeding Virginia*.
- **McAllister Memorial Clothes Closet** is operated by Presbyterian Women. It is located adjacent to the Food Pantry, and operates on the same schedule.
- **Men of Mission** is a community based organization which provides volunteer assistance for the Food Pantry, builds accessibility ramps and undertakes other projects in Covington, Clifton Forge and Alleghany County.
- **Vacation Bible School** is offered each June, with classes for all ages.

- **Presbyterian Mission Week** is a cooperative effort sponsored by local PC(USA) congregations, which brings in work teams from outside the community to join with local volunteers to assist those in need with painting, renovation and construction projects at their homes. The Fellowship Hall at McAllister Memorial serves as home base for Mission Week.
- **Community Lenten Luncheons** are a weekly series of inspirational messages and meals organized by the local Ministerium and hosted by various churches during the Lenten season.
- **Christmas Cheer** provides families and individuals gifts, clothing and groceries for the holiday meal, in cooperation with the Alleghany Highlands Christmas Mother program.
- **Bereavement Meals** are provided for family and friends following funerals.
- McAllister Memorial supports Presbyterian Missionary the **Rev. Dr. Tom Harvey** at the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies (OCMS), which trains global church leaders, scholars, and missionaries working in complex and diverse contexts around the globe.
- McAllister Memorial sponsors **Boy Scout Troop 31** and **Girl Scout Troop 718**, which meet at the church.
- McAllister Memorial supports the Presbyterian benevolences by participating and contributing to **Sunnyside Links of Love, Blanket Sunday, 2 Cents a Meal, Birthday Offering, Thank Offering, and Joy Gift.**
- **The Alleghany Highlands Chorale** is a community chorus, under the direction of the church's choir director, which rehearses at the church and often gives performances in the sanctuary.
- Church members are involved in a number of **charitable organizations** in the community and often hold benefit activities at the church for causes designed to eradicate or cure diseases or illness, i.e., cancer, heart disease, etc.

The Physical Plant

The church facility is located at 900 North Alleghany Avenue (US 220). A narrow landscaped area faces the road, with a small adjacent lot used for parking. Additional parking is available behind the church, with access to the lower level. Constructed of brick, the facility presents itself as a rambling one story building, although its position on a hillside means the basement level is open at the rear. A 400-seat sanctuary, constructed in 1957 anchors the north end of the facility. The chancel features a Holtkamp pipe organ, with a lectern and pulpit flanking; there is also a Grand Piano on the floor level.

The sanctuary is equipped with a modern sound system and wireless hearing assistance. A church study is situated next to the chancel area, featuring a small lavatory and a separate outside entrance. Below the sanctuary are three Sunday School Rooms, nursery and toddler facilities, two choir practice rooms and two restrooms. This lower level has limited handicapped accessibility, with ramps at several entrances. A Fellowship Hall constructed in 1978 anchors the south end of the facility, connected to the sanctuary by a central welcome area, offices and handicapped accessible restrooms. Attached to the Fellowship Hall is a spacious kitchen, fully appointed with residential appliances. Beneath the Fellowship Hall, the COPE Food Pantry occupies three rooms; the Clothes Closet occupies two rooms, and there are three large classrooms. This lower level is handicapped accessible by a sloped walkway from the outside.

Property

The church also owns a paved parking lot across North Alleghany Avenue, with spaces for 60 cars, and a small unpaved lot on East Cedar Street. The Covington Police Department provides an officer to aid in crossing North Alleghany Road following Sunday worship.

Liquid Assets

McAllister Memorial currently holds approximately \$90,000 in a checking account, of which approximately \$15,000 are designated or pass through funds. The church also holds four Certificates of Deposit with an estimated value of \$226,500.

Church Finances

McAllister Memorial Presbyterian Church is financially sound, and can easily support a full-time pastor for the next three years.

In 2017, the congregation had 107 giving units, which is down from 135 giving units in 2014 - an almost direct decline as a result of the deaths of 48 members from 2014 through 2017.

Despite the decline in giving units, average giving per unit has increased by a modest amount. (*With the exception of 2014, when a large bequest inflated the average.) The average yearly giving, per giving unit is as follows:

2014---\$1870*

2015---\$1623

2016---\$1669

2017---\$1734 *estimated, based on 6 month average*

Budget estimates for the next three years are based on the 2014 budget, the last year McAllister budgeted a full-time Pastor. Added to this figure are the increased salaries of the Minister of Music and Organist, money for additional maintenance, and a 3% cost of living adjustment. The estimated budgets are, as follows:

- **2018---\$235,392.00**
- **2019---\$242,453.00**
- **2020---\$249,726.00**

At the current rate of giving, this suggests a \$50,000 budget deficit for next year; however, a combination of revised budgeting procedures and Stewardship Education (which had not happened in decades) should close the budget gap somewhat.

Summary and Invitation to Commitment

McAllister Memorial Presbyterian Church will celebrate its 100th anniversary in 2018. It has had a significant impact on the lives of those who have worshipped in its sanctuaries, served in its benevolent programs and fellowshiped in its events and activities. The community has been enriched by its presence. It has trained, nurtured, inspired, guided, supported and comforted thousands of souls and provided a spiritual experience filled with care, love and kindness.

The church is now ready to embark on a new century of service and commitment. This mission study has served to validate our sense of being disciples of Jesus Christ and further define the church we are meant to be. While we have excelled in caring for our fellow beings, we must now commit ourselves to new levels of evangelism and service.

The session now invites the congregation to begin a new chapter in the church history by seeking, nominating, and employing a new pastor who will help the church implement its vision to accomplish the mission inspired by its faith in the triune God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

ADDENDUM

Our Mission Study Team

Betsy Caul – Betsy and her husband, Bert, were married in 1964 and she became a member of the church. Bert grew up in the church. They raised two children, a son, Chris, and a daughter, Tammy, who is deceased. Bert is retired from WestRock and Betsy is retired from her antique business. They now live on a farm in southern Alleghany County. Bert is currently a member of Session. Betsy is a former Clerk of the Session and a current Sunday school teacher. She is a Bible Study teacher and Secretary of the Presbyterian Women. Betsy was also an Enabler of the Presbytery of the Peaks Presbyterian Women.

Bobby J. Rice – Bobby and his wife, Anita, were married in the church in 1973. He was born in Glasgow and came to Covington in the spring of 1971 with Leggett Department Store. His wife was the daughter of a Leggett employee. Anita grew up attending McAllister and Bobby joined the church in 1973. Bobby left Leggett in 1973 and worked for the U.S. Postal Service until his retirement in 2011. Anita taught in the Covington School System until 2012. They raised one son, Brian, in the church and have been active in the programs of the church. Bobby is currently serving on Session and Anita teaches Sunday school. They are both members of the Church Bell Choir. They live in a subdivision of Covington located in Alleghany County.

Paul D. Linkenhoker – Paul and his wife, Brenda, were married in the church in 1970. Brenda grew up in the church but Paul went to South Covington United Methodist. They attended South Covington until 1975 when they both became members of McAllister Memorial. They were called to the First Presbyterian Church in Covington in 1993 and attended there until 2012 when they returned to McAllister. Their two daughters attended McAllister during their youth. Paul is a retired educator and retired U.S. Army Reserve officer. Brenda is a retired nurse anesthetist. Paul has served on the Session of both McAllister & First Presbyterian churches and is a past Clerk of the Session at McAllister. Brenda served as an elder at First Presbyterian and was on a PNC for that congregation. They both teach Sunday school and are members of the chancel choir and bell choir. Brenda also works with the youth music program.

Patrick Pettitt – Patrick is the Interim Pastor of McAllister Memorial and began his service here on January 1, 2017. He is serving the church on loan from the Shenandoah Presbytery. He lives in Grottoes with his wife Ann. They have three grown children. Patrick has served several interim pastorates and is skilled in the transition process of calling a new pastor. His wife is an Associate Pastor at the Massanutten Presbyterian Church. He has provided support and guidance to the team during the Mission Study and assisted in the compilation of statistics and historical information.

Data Gathering

The development of the mission and vision statements were guided by the results of the sensing sessions with the cross section of the church congregation. The questions and answers at those sessions are listed below:

- *What are the most **important** things this church does?*

Worship Love & serve people Teach the Gospel
Worship Minister to the needy Self care
Worship Teach/Learn
Worship Minister to young people Community Outreach
Serve God Help others Teach/Learn Worship
Worship Pray for others Teach about Jesus
Support/serve 'Evangelize' Worship

- *What is the church's most **effective** area of ministry?*

Outreach: Food Pantry, Clothes Closet, Christmas Cheer, Scouts, WRE

Caring for others Self-care
Feeding/Caring for others Self care
Worship Teach the Gospel Care for People
Outreach Self care
Helping others: *Food pantry, Clothes Closet, Christmas cheer*
Vacation Bible School Youth Group
Worship 'Giving food away'
Food Pantry/Clothes Closet Use of space – scouts, etc.
Self care – funeral meals Mission week
Christmas Cheer

- *What about this church has **disappointed** you at times?*

Empty pews Music program decline
lack of response to cultural changes (empty pews)
Stagnation Competition from the culture Evangelism
Cultural changes – Empty Pews
We are not welcoming- don't greet others enough ...'Hospitality'
Lack of Enthusiasm Empty pews – cultural changes
Low worship attendance – cultural changes
Busy-ness, uncertainty lack of commitment- priorities

- *What is the **least effective** area of ministry?*

Evangelism, i.e. sharing the Gospel to change lives
Stewardship Evangelism

- *Name two needs in the **community** around the church.*

Family Structure Alleviation of poverty, and the difficulties that surround it.

Family issues – we don't know the community

Jobs Connection 'we need to hear from the community'

Alleviation of poverty our 'lack of awareness'

Poverty – drugs/crime 'We don't know the needs'

Pick up people for church Jobs Elder care Home repair

- *Name two needs in your **neighborhoods**.*

Learn about our neighbors

Witness to them/evangelize our neighborhoods

Transportation Lonliness/Isolation

Communication connections/'neighborliness'

slow down – too much 'busyness Get to know one another

'neighborliness:' focused opportunities to build relationships

Teach them about God

"Stop- smuggling" Help each other out Reach out in friendship

Social Interaction – outreach

Participation in Community events

'Recruitment'

- *Sum up **God's Call** to this church in one phrase.*

"To be the Friendly Church on the Hill."

"Spreading the Gospel through Word & Action."

"The Caring Church on the Hill" "The Light on the Hill"

"Sharing God's love by helping our neighbors"

"Where everyone is welcome"

"We love McAllister Church"

"Feed, Nurture, Welcome and Serve"

"The Church Opens Wide Its Doors"

"Come To Learn"

- *Name new things-you would like to see happen in this church*

Family Nights, open to the community

Trunk or Treat in neighborhood around the church

Hand out water on Halloween Deliver Christmas Cheer

"Make adults acolyte" Announce birthdays

Organized contact with inactives, prospects

'snacks for teachers'

Street fair – visibility at local events Transportation ministry