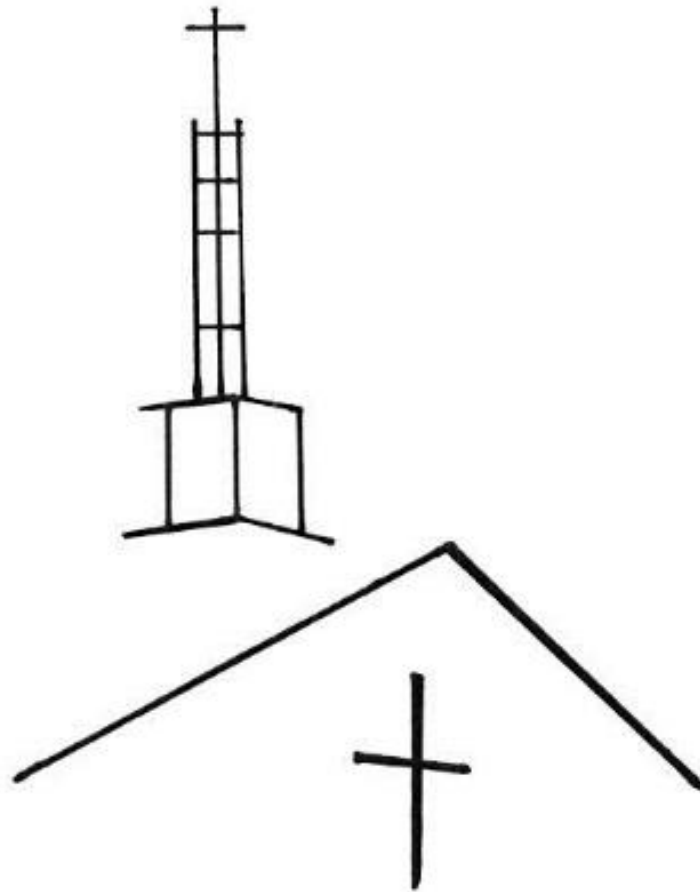


# North Raleigh Presbyterian Church



## Mission Study Report 2016

## INTRODUCTION

The North Raleigh Presbyterian Church (NRPC) Mission Study provides a glimpse of who we are as a church, serving the North Raleigh community. It also focuses on our aspirations and needs as a congregation to continue growing in Christ. The intent of documenting our updated mission and vision is to provide the framework for the Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) as it searches for a new pastor to lead, teach, and walk with us.

As a congregation, we have taken this transitional time to reflect on how to move forward together. We have introspectively considered our commitments to each other as brothers and sisters in Christ and engaged in thoughtful discussion about where we believe God is calling us as a church.

This document is intended to serve as a guide to the PNC, a map for our members, a blueprint for our church leaders, and an introduction to the larger community about our dynamic, caring church. It has been prayerfully prepared by the Mission Study Team: Roger Askew, Carolyn Drum, Hugh Fitzpatrick, Jamie Gordon, and Lee Mabry.



NRPC Entrance

## HISTORY

**“Ask the former generation and find out what their ancestors learned,  
for we were born only yesterday . . . Will they not instruct you and tell you?”**

**~ Job 8:8-10**

One theme will become abundantly clear throughout this report – we at NRPC are enthusiastic about the amazing things happening right now in the life of our church, and we are even more excited about our future!

We have been blessed with a dynamic history. Chartered in 1984, we are considered a young church. We started out humbly, meeting in the cafeteria of a local elementary school. The charter congregation consisted of sixty people sharing a common vision. Hard work and a growing and dedicated congregation shaped our early years.

We began worshipping in the Faith Ministries Building in 1989, and as we continued to grow, we were blessed with a beautiful new sanctuary in 2003.

The rapid growth of our Christian Education ministry necessitated the placement of two modular units in 2009 to house our growing Sunday School program and youth and adult activities. Our beautiful Memorial Garden was completed in 2013.

God has blessed us with our seven acre church campus and its facilities. We have grown tremendously since 1987, and God has consistently met our needs for thirty-two years.

#### NRPC PASTORS

1984 Wilson Gunn,  
organizing pastor

1988 Tim Bird

1997 Bob Hann

2001 Lynn Stall

2011 Craig Miller

## VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Since 1984, NRPC has centered on being a welcoming community of faith. In 2010, the Mission and Vision statements were re-examined. The final mission statement read ***NRPC is a welcoming community responding to the call of Jesus Christ to serve through engaged discipleship.*** The 2010 Mission Statement and supporting goals were very clear in where our congregation needed to focus and provided actionable statements and examples.

Along with that, our Mission Statement encompassed many values we hold close today; key words included: ***vibrant, contagious, nurture, equip, expansion, grow, youth, dynamic, and sustained community of faith.***

The 2016 Mission Study Team reviewed the 2010 study, evaluated the information gathered by the 2015 Wellness Team, and met with many members in planned meetings and open forums. In addition, the New Hope Presbytery's Commission on Ministry provided candid input and direction.

2016 brings change to our congregation and an opportunity to re-commit to our mission. Change will come in terms of leadership, but who we are and our called purpose remain steadfast. Although transitions typically mean rewritten mission and vision statements, it is clear that NRPC needs to stay the course and take the words and meaning of the mission and vision statements and put them into action. Our defining goals and objectives from 2010 are rephrased and are written on the following page as our Guiding Principles.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES



Greeting at NRPC on Sunday Morning

Our worship together will demonstrate a **vibrant and spiritual community of faith** that attracts current and future members.

**Worshiping at NRPC** will show our love and praise of Jesus Christ in song, service, scripture, and message.

We will be a **nurturing church** by providing educational opportunities for all ages that will deepen our relationship with Jesus Christ.

**Develop leadership** within the Church by nurturing each individual's call to engaged discipleship.

We will reach out to our **local community** to serve and show our love of Jesus Christ and one another.

Buildings will not define NRPC. As our church continues to grow, both in numbers and in spiritual needs, God will provide our direction for **facility and staffing needs**.

We will sustain our **close community of faith** through actionable decisions to remain engaged in our works, as well as following the **polity** of the Presbyterian Church.

With our guiding principles in place we are ready to continue this transition. We will embrace positive change and work to bring along all those that are called. We realize the call to serve comes in many shapes and sizes, and we commit to this transition as a whole and united church body.

## OUR ORGANIZATION AND LEADERSHIP

NRPC is blessed to have a dedicated staff and session. Our church depends on its minister, lay staff and its many, many volunteers to carry out our Mission and Vision.

### Professional Staff

The NRPC staff is incredibly talented and dedicated. All are passionate about growing NRPC and fostering God's kingdom within the congregation and community. Currently we have four staff members in addition to our ordained pastor. Visit our website to learn about our staff and to contact them:

<http://www.northraleighpc.org/our-staff.html>

## Session

God calls officers to provide leadership for the church. These officers are called elders and are chosen by the people of the church. Along with the minister they lead, govern, discipline, and are responsible for the life of the church. Each elder serves on session for a three year term.

The session is composed of ministry teams that are responsible for specific areas such as Finance, Outreach, Human Resources, and Facilities to name a few. Each ministry team is chaired by a member of session.

We are proud that a member of the NRPC youth is elected each year to serve a one year term on the session.

Currently our session consists of sixteen members. Information about our session can be found at the following website:

<http://www.northraleighpc.org/session.html>

## Diaconate

The diaconate fosters a culture of care within NRPC through greater and deeper member connections and helps in meeting member needs. Each deacon ministers to the families and individuals assigned to them by modeling and extending the love of Jesus Christ. This group of individuals ensures that each member of our faith community is cared for and helps to link our Congregational Care team with members in need.

NRPC currently has eighteen deacons. Information can be found at the following website:

<http://www.northraleighpc.org/diaconate.html>



NRPC Artist Rendering

## TRANSITIONAL PRIORITIES

2015-16 marks a time of change. Staff and session want this to be an opportunity to refocus our desires and discern God's will.

**Worship** will continue to provide spiritual guidance and an uplifting message rooted in the scripture. Our music ministry will continue to thrive and provide creative ways to experience our worship on Sunday.

**Congregation participation** in church programs is important at all times during the life of a church; however, it is essential at this time as we grow to reach the needs of our community and congregation. We will encourage more participation, as well as seek inspired ways to engage members.

**Communication and polity** within the church will have increased focus as we develop programs such as youth group, bible studies, and mid-week events. Although we strive for continuity in 2016, we must realize that decisions are not always based on unanimous agreement but will continually meet the vision and mission statements intent.

**Congregational engagement** is vital for any church that wants to grow and to enhance programs. Areas of focus will be on Sunday School leadership and broader participation on committees and in church events.



Church Picnic



Confirmation Sunday



Rally Day

## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

God calls us to focus on the immediate future but trust he has a long term vision for us. As we look further into the future some hopes, dreams and prayers come into focus.



## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE - VISION

**North Raleigh Presbyterian Church  
is a church that lives out its mission every day.**

**We will be a  
PASSIONATE,  
ENGAGED,  
GENEROUS,  
EFFECTIVE,  
INTIMATE,  
and HEALTHY CONGREGATION.**

NRPC, a welcoming community of faith, is a congregation with a strong desire to fulfill God's mission. As a congregation we seek to discern His will for our church, as individuals and as a community. We will worship with faith, hope, and trust in the Lord. Our goal is to continue to build on the foundation of our church. We seek God's call and realize we are one church and will move forward together. We will begin to see the long-term vision of NRPC. Our strategic emphases will be: Worship, Leadership, Congregational Care, Christian Education, and Outreach.



Annual Church Picnic



Youth Hosted Social Dance



## WORSHIP



**“Come let us sing for joy to the Lord; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation.  
Let us come before Him with thanksgiving and extol Him with music and song.  
Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker;  
for He is our God and we are the people of His pasture, the flock under His care.”**

*~Psalm 95: 1-2, 6-7*

Worship is held Sunday mornings at 10:30 AM to provide members with a weekly time to praise, reflect, learn and strengthen their faith. The service typically follows the Presbyterian order. The sacrament of Holy Communion is observed the first Sunday of each month.

Often sermons at NRPC inspire and challenge members by touching on everyday life while remaining biblically based. Congregational members are encouraged to participate in leading worship. Children and youth are often included and occasionally lead the service, as time at NRPC is family time. Our nursery is staffed on Sunday mornings and during many other church events for the care of the youngest in our church family.

Music is integral to our service, and we enjoy both listening to music provided by our growing music program participants and by joining in with singing both traditional and modern hymns. Currently NRPC employs a very dedicated part-time music director. The music program encompasses a range of activities including children’s choir, youth choir, youth bells, adult choir, adult bells, and orchestra. Not only does the music carry us through worship, it provides another way to fellowship together as a community through rehearsals. Worship through music on Sunday begins, ends and is carried by exceptional organ music from our dedicated organist.

A final element to worship at NRPC is time to meet and greet one another. This congregation is known for being welcoming and making all worshipers feel at home and included in our close church family.

## Key Elements Desired In Worship

- Time for greeting and fellowship.
- Worship which includes sacraments, communal participation, and individual reflective elements which are rooted in conventional values but blend new ideas and traditions.
- Dedicated portions of the service for children and youth as well as youth participation in leading worship.
- A focus on biblical lessons that can be applied to everyday life and grow one's personal relationship with God.
- A strong and growing music program that elevates the spiritual experience of worship and praises God.



Worship

## How We Stay There

- Call a pastor, who is a strong worship leader; who is comfortable ministering the Word and Sacrament and teaching the congregation from the pulpit on a weekly basis.
- Continue to provide for and grow the existing music program.
- Continue to provide for and grow the youth and children programs at NRPC and integrate them into worship.
- Maintain the style of worship that attracts and retains our members and regular attendees.
- Encourage fellowship and caring amongst worship attendees and congregational members.

## Our Challenge

- As the worship service continues to be the entry into our church community, we will continue to cultivate the traditions and strengths that already exist while bringing in new leaders, inspiring youth, incorporating all ages and engaging new members.



Children's Sermon



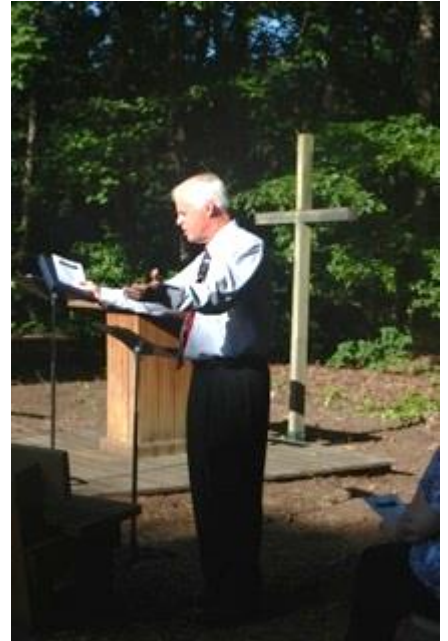
Choir

## Leadership

As we move forward, we will commit to each other to be a community of healing, trust and love of each other and our leaders.

The role of session is to adhere to the polity of the Presbyterian Church while discerning the future needs of the congregation and community. Having a large qualified group on session does not ensure a successful future. The congregation must participate and engage in the Church, and they must support their session.

The NRPC staff is doing exceptional work. We recognize the dedication of our directors of Christian Education and Music and want these positions supported and expanded. These two areas have been identified as key strengths that will continue to grow to further meet the mission of our church.



Outdoor Worship

### Key Elements Desired in Leadership

- A pastor who is a supporter of staff and their programs.
- Effective communication from the session to the congregation
- A pastor with strong leadership and a diplomatic approach to moderate our session
- Adherence to polity

### How We Get There

- Trust, love, prayers and support for our elected leaders with specific focus on the Pastor Nominating Committee.
- Faith in the decisions of the session and church committees.
- Call a strong administrative leader who can lead our staff and session into the future.

### Our Challenge

- Strengthen our leaders so that we can move forward united as a trusting and loving community.

**“Blessed are those who trust in the Lord,  
whose trust is the Lord.”**

***~Jeremiah 17:7***

## CONGREGATIONAL CARE

Caring for one another is not only how our church responds to Jesus' commandment to love one another, it is an integral part of life at NRPC. While our diaconate has existed for less than five years, it has become a primary care giving body for our church. It is growing in importance to our church, and our membership recognizes that it is key to meeting the member care needs of our congregation. NRPC is a growing church. There is a need for individual member care and these duties will be shared appropriately between the pastoral staff and the elected diaconate that has been called to care for, pray for, and connect members in need with the appropriate ministry team. We want a leader who will train, delegate and help to identify how to personally look after each individual member of our community. Finding this balance will enable us to maintain the caring, family atmosphere that is essential to the NRPC identity while growing our membership in the future.

Other essential aspects of our congregational care ministry include:

- Meal Ministry - to those experiencing hardships
- Transportation - to and from church and appointments
- Card Ministry - birthdays, sympathy cards, etc.
- Prayer Ministry
- Monthly Nifty Sixties Plus Luncheon

Our Congregational Care Ministry is very active. In this ministry, we recruit families to welcome and greet everyone at each Sunday morning worship service. We also follow up with first time visitors to ensure they feel welcomed and encouraged to return if they desire.

### Key Elements Desired In Congregational Care

- Pastor who values the ministry of the diaconate.
- Compassionate and understanding leadership in caring for the church family.
- Continue the ministries that support and foster the welcoming community of the church.

### How We Get There

- Call a pastor whose ministry emphasizes pastoral care and relationship development.
- Grow the ministries of the Congregational Care Team.

### Our Challenge

- Continue to fulfil our promise to "love one another" and ensure that we commit to a covenant that the care of our congregation is the responsibility of every member.



Church Picnic

**“A new commandment  
I give to you, that you  
love one another,  
even as I have loved you,  
that you also love one  
another.  
By this all men will know  
that you are my  
disciples, if you have  
love for one another”**

**~ John 13:34**

# CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



Sunday School

**“For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope”**

*~ Romans 15*

Christian Education seeks to nurture a connected, caring community of learners. Our goal is to build a strong Biblical foundation, express our beliefs through our action in the world, and provide opportunities for strong faith formation, lifelong learning and spiritual growth for all. The growth in our Christian education programs reflect the congregation’s desire and commitment to fulfill our vision to educate and provide opportunities for all ages and abilities. Much of the recent growth and success can be attributed to adding a part-time Director of Christian Education.

Our education programs must be varied to reach members in meaningful ways and to offer them growth where they most need it. For some, basic Bible study is desired; for others, they are ready to tackle deeper theological learning. Families feeling the stress of our busy culture and lifestyles sometimes struggle with finding the balance between the desire for morning family time and making Sunday School a priority. While there is much energy and success in our overall program, we want to ensure that we are fulfilling our vision to nurture a strong faith formation and rich spiritual life for all.

**“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path”**  
*~Psalm 119:105*

## SUNDAY MORNINGS

During our Sunday School hour, children are engaged musically with our Director of Music and have classes that are centered on PCUSA curriculum. There are two weekly youth Sunday School classes.

Additionally, the confirmation class meets each spring for several months to prepare those ready to join the church. There are four regularly offered adult programs on Sunday morning.



Sunday School

Children preschool to first grade, begin worship with their families in the Sanctuary. Following the "Sharing the Faith with our Children" time, children are invited to participate in Children's Church in the Faith Ministries Building where they share in liturgical call and responses using the symbols of our faith and learn the scripture through drama or storytelling, singing, and praying together.

## KIDS AND YOUTH

In addition to our Sunday morning offerings, our younger members grow, share, and act on their faith in numerous other ways. Our third through fifth graders participate in a yearlong program that encourages fellowship and friendship and provides them with local mission opportunities. Our youth group meets together on Sunday evenings for supper and then moves into high energy games, discussions, fun outings, and mission projects. Youth are invited to plan and lead programs. Throughout the year this group also participates in mission projects and retreats.

**“Train a child in the way he should go,  
and when he is old he will not turn from it”**

*~ Proverbs 22:6*



VBS



Rally Day



Sunday School

## FAMILY AND ADULTS

NRPC is fortunate to have a calendar filled with opportunities for people to connect with each other and deepen their spirituality and understanding of God’s Word. The most popular of these is our MAX (Music, Art, eXpression) program which meets Wednesdays for study and fellowship including a delicious meal, music and art for children preschool - 5th grade, and an adult study. Youth participate as helpers in the children's program. Other activities include the weekly Men’s Bible and Breakfast, semi-monthly Older Adult Bible Study, and monthly offerings with Women’s Spirituality, Book Club, Faith and Film, and Soul Sisters. Additionally, the church community engages in fellowship throughout the year through potlucks, church picnics and holiday celebrations.

## KEY ELEMENTS DESIRED

- Increase the number/variety of adult Sunday School offerings with dedicated teachers.
- Support and grow education programs offered beyond the Sunday School hour.
- Keep our youth engaged and offer dynamic classes and programs that attract those not currently attending, both from within the membership and from the larger community.
- A pastor who feels called to periodically lead classes.
- Increase attendance in Sunday School programs.

## HOW WE GET THERE

- Have our Christian Education Team work with our Director of Christian Education to develop a lifelong learning plan.
- Make our Director of Christian Education a full time position.
- Publicize our youth activities to the larger community
- Train, nurture, and support members in their efforts to teach others

## OUR CHALLENGE

- Emphasize the importance of nurturing and growing faith through learning beyond attending worship to engage all members in Christian Education.



3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> Grade Youth Fellowship

## OUTREACH



**“Many are the plans in a person’s heart,  
but it is the Lord’s purpose that prevails”**

*~Proverbs 19:21*

**Food Bank**

Our ministry of serving and caring for others is a priority. NRPC members respond to the needs of our community by contributing their time and talents to many organizations including the Local Food Bank, Habitat for Humanity, the Helen Wright Center (shelter for homeless women), the Interfaith Food Shuttle, Urban Ministries of Wake County, Note in a Pocket and North Raleigh Ministries.

Additionally, we are committed to sharing God’s love outside our community. Each year we send youth and adults to support the Appalachian Service Project (ASP). The volunteers spend time improving the homes and living situations of those in need. Through the fellowship and experiences shared while away serving in God’s name, the mission teams grow closer to each other and to the Lord.

One of the largest events each year for NRPC is the annual yard sale on the Saturday before the Super Bowl. This year over one hundred-forty members participated in and raised over \$13,000 the majority of which goes into our mission support fund.

Outreach to those in need is an important value that NRPC instills in all of its members. One example of the church embracing outreach comes from our youth – a young member initiated a project to collect and distribute hand warmers and non-perishable and easy to eat foods in easy to grab bags that can be kept in one’s car and given to those asking for assistance in our everyday lives.



**NRPC Yard Sale**



**Habitat for Humanity**



**Appalachia Service Project**



## Key Elements Desired In Outreach

- Thoughtful participation in caring for our community.
- Fellowship through shared experiences with other congregational and community members.
- Show God's love for all mankind through our actions and our words

## How We Get There

- Align outreach activities with current vision and guiding principles.
- Increase engagement within the congregation in outreach opportunities that enrich the recipient and the participant alike

## Our Challenge:

- We will prayerfully discern where God is calling us to serve the growing needs of our community.



[NRPC Appalachia Service Project Team](#)

# PASTOR



## IN SUMMARY

Our church seeks a strong pastor, committed for the long term. We desire stability. We desire unity. We want to learn. We want to worship together. We desire to be the most engaged disciples for Christ we can be.

Our congregation stands ready to work with one another and our new pastor to serve the mission of Jesus Christ, in our church and in our community. We agree to work together, even when confronted with differences or in the face of adversity. We believe our commitment to each other is an integral step towards ensuring the future of NRPC.

Our church mission is to continue to be one of the most welcoming and caring churches in our community, and we want to grow our membership and ministries in accordance with God's will.

To follow this call, we are praying for a pastor as we seek to meet these great ends of the church:

- The proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind
- The shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship of the children of God
- The maintenance of divine worship
- The preservation of the truth
- The promotion of social righteousness
- The exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world

Whether you are reading this report as a visitor to our church, a prospective member looking for a church home, just browsing our website or if you are a pastor being called to take a closer look at our church, please know that we want you to join us! You are welcome here.

You will soon learn why we are a welcoming church serving Jesus Christ through engaged discipleship!

Appendix:  
Community Interviews



INFORMATIONGATH  
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