

# Second Presbyterian Church 2025 Introduction to an Exciting Journey



## A Joyful Time to Celebrate, Reflect, and Look Forward.

With gratitude from God, this year marks the 195th year for Second Presbyterian Church of Louisville. As we move toward our 200th anniversary we have a wonderful opportunity to reflect on our many accomplishments, evaluate our current mission and vision, and identify new strategic pathways that will help us meet the needs of our congregation and community. Achieving these strategies over the next five years will help us embrace our extraordinary Bicentennial milestone in 2030.

Each of the identified strategic pathways are designed to build on current strengths, preserve shared values, create new opportunities to enhance our community of

faith, and welcome new members of all generations who will help chart our future.

This initiative is based on the discernment of Session and informed by input from congregants and staff members. We have also taken into account academic research and publications outlining the changing face of American culture and its impact on institutional religion. In addition, several strategic plans written by churches similar to Second Presbyterian have been reviewed. For these initiatives to succeed every member of our congregation and staff will need to work creatively and collaboratively across boundaries, committees, and generations.

# A TIME TO EVOLVE

Second Presbyterian's success and longevity can be attributed to faithfully responding to God's grace through innovation, and a steadfast purpose. Our church has played impactful roles in establishing the Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, The Cabbage Patch Settlement House, the Kilgore Samaritan Counseling Center, and Second Presbyterian Weekday School.

As we prepare to continue the journey of faith into our 200th year it is also important to realize that we are a church in transition. With our new pastor, Barrett Abernethy, joining us in September we have built in

flexibility that allows new leadership to review the strategic pathways, refine them as needed, and continue to advance them.

The Planning Committee, in collaboration with Session, staff, our operating committees, and congregants, have identified five key strategic pathways that will ensure that the purpose and benefits of this church continue to be woven into the fabric of our daily lives. The summary that follows briefly explains the goals for each pathway and shares a sample of the recommended initiatives that may be implemented over the next five years.

**SECOND PRESBYTERIAN'S** steadfast **FOUNDATION OF FAITH** is supported by **NUMEROUS VIRTUES AND BLESSINGS** including our:

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**FACILITIES AND HOW WE UTILIZE THEM** **STEWARDSHIP** **A VARIETY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION OFFERINGS**  
**MISSION AND OUTREACH** **THE WEEKDAY SCHOOL** **TIRELESS VOLUNTEERS**  
**FELLOWSHIP PASTORS** **MUSIC MINISTRY**  
**SUNDAY SERVICES** **SUPPORT STAFF** **CONGREGATIONAL CARE**  
**CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRIES** **COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

# PATHWAY 1: SEEKING WORSHIP THAT HONORS GOD: *EXPLORING WAYS TO EXPAND WORSHIP*

## COLOSSIANS 3:16-17

“Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”

### GOAL

Improve and deepen the worship experience for members and the community we live in. This includes offering alternative services and venues to explore new and creative ways of glorifying God together.

### Recommendations:

- Host a series of open house gatherings with members (town halls, workshops, etc) to explore and discuss ideas for adding new worship opportunities that fit into their busy lives.
- Enhance the worship experience (before, during and after the service) on Sunday morning by providing more opportunities to engage with families, children, and youth.
- Introduce additional worship options that connect with different groups of people.
- Create a more welcoming experience at Sunday morning worship services for visitors, new members, and returning members that includes personal conversations with staff and congregants.
- Explore and seek to improve the on-line Sunday morning worship experience for regular attendees so that it is more relational and serves as a faith community.



# PATHWAY 2: **CREATING FELLOWSHIP THAT REFLECTS CHRIST'S LOVE: DEEPENING GROUP EXPERIENCES AND RELATIONSHIPS**

## ACTS 2:42-47

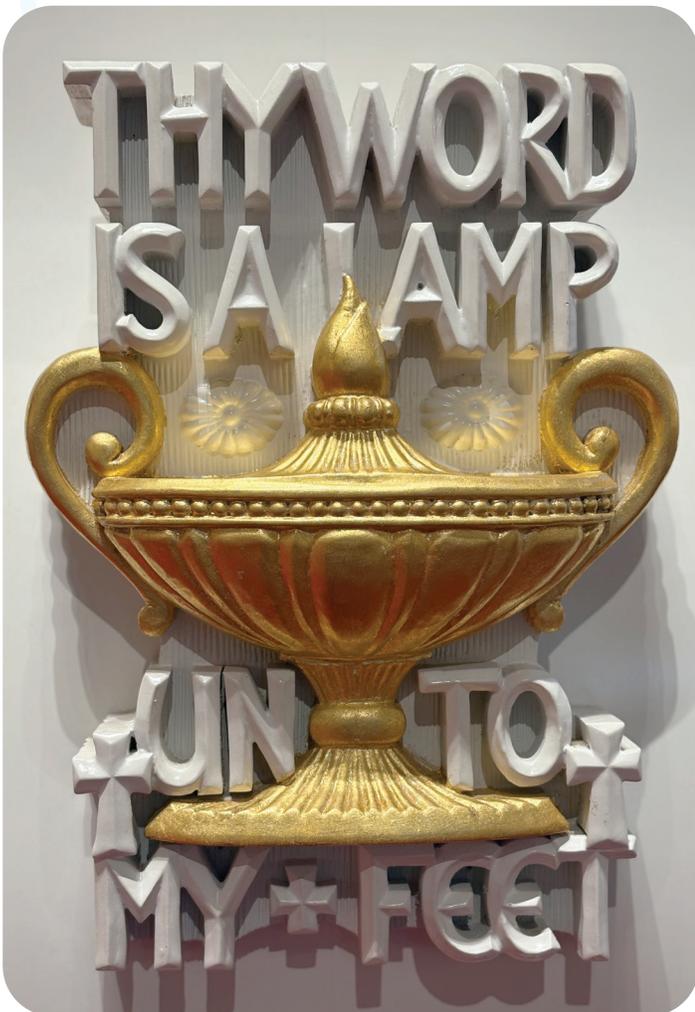
“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.”

## GOAL

Create a more vibrant and welcoming church community by focusing on the relational aspects of worship, study, fellowship, mission, and all the ministries of the church. This pathway emphasizes the creation of more and deeper small group experiences to foster genuine connections and spiritual growth.

## Recommendations:

- Expand small groups that meet regularly for prayer, Bible study, and fellowship.
- Encourage multi-generational participation in church activities to build a sense of family.
- Host events that promote community and deepen relationships among members.
- Expand mission opportunities that allow members to serve and witness in the community.



# PATHWAY 3: *SPREADING GOD'S SPIRIT: IMPROVING INTERNAL & EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS*

## MATTHEW 5:14-16

“You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”

### GOAL

Provide clear, effective, and targeted communications and marketing within the congregation to improve member retention and satisfaction and in the wider community to attract potential new members. This includes enhancing our presence on social media to reach more people with the message of Christ and utilizing emerging technologies for learning and sharing God's Word.

### Recommendations:

- Activate a staff member and/or member-led group to proactively manage communications activities
- Actively create and share targeted content through available traditional and digital media according to member's specific preferences.
- Create engaging content for social media that shares the church's mission and activities.
- Develop an all-encompassing communication plan that keeps members and staff informed and connected.
- Organize outreach events that invite the community to experience God's love.
- Create a technology task force to explore emerging technologies for learning and sharing God's Word.
- Fund a new staff position dedicated to communications.



# PATHWAY 4: GROWING OUR FAITH: *ENGAGING NEW MEMBERS OF ALL AGES*

## DEUTERONOMY 6:6-7

“These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.”

### GOAL

Increase and deepen the faith formation opportunities for our church family and community. By nurturing and building the faith of every age group, we ensure the future of Second Presbyterian Church is rooted in strong, Christ-centered discipleship and will continue to grow in the years to come.

### Recommendations:

- Reach out to inactive members and former members to reconnect, listen to their concerns, and offer support, in hopes they would consider returning to worship, fellowship, and faith formation opportunities.
- Further develop children and youth ministry in meaningful ways to strengthen faith practices and reconnect with the church community.
- Equip parents to take an active role in their children’s spiritual development.
- Provide resources and support for families to grow in faith together.
- Enhance our adult education offerings.
- Explore outreach opportunities that may present the opportunity to attract new members.
- Better incorporate the Weekday School into the church’s ministries through outreach opportunities.



# PATHWAY 5: PRACTICING STEWARDSHIP THAT GLORIFIES GOD: *SUSTAINING FINANCIAL AND OPERATIONAL SECURITY*

## PETER 4:10

“Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.”

### GOAL

Guarantee the long-term financial and operational stability of the church, its staff, and its facility. By being faithful stewards of the resources God has entrusted to us, we ensure that the church can continue to serve the Lord for generations to come.

### Recommendations:

- Develop a comprehensive multi-year financial plan that supports the church's mission and vision.
- Encourage generous giving and responsible management of church resources.
- Launch a robust planned giving initiative.
- Complete and operationalize an updated facilities master plan.
- Invest in the maintenance and improvement of church facilities to support ministry activities.
- Explore alternative uses of our church facilities that serves our community.



# A TIME TO ASPIRE TO INSPIRE

If you've ever taken the time to read Second Presbyterian's fascinating history you'll realize how resilient the members of our congregation have been since the doors first opened in 1830. Over the last 195 years this church has survived two fires, a flood, multiple wars starting with the Civil War, a tornado, and most recently a global pandemic. And yet, through all the endured hardships, as well as our joys and times of peace, God has led us to thrive, serve our community, and bring joy to the people we affectionately call our family of faith. This is the essence of what keeps us actively involved

in the church.

Today, people are busier than ever with many demands on our time, resources, and loyalties. Yet, we are blessed with a congregation that prioritizes its spiritual growth, faithful service, joyful worship, and generous support of our 2nd home. All while striving to be the best versions of ourselves and contribute to the greater community.

There are so many reasons why taking part in this renewed faith journey is vitally important.

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## SECOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH SERVES AS A SANCTUARY FOR:

**Reinforcing the values of socialization**

Strengthening our faith through worship, missions, Sunday School, music ministries

**Supporting each other in times of pain, loneliness, grief, and sorrow**

**Fulfilling the relevant needs of all age groups**

**Assisting our young parents**

Celebrating marriages, baptisms, anniversaries, confirmations, new members

**Inspiring our youth to put their faith into action in the world.**

**Sharing God's foundational lessons with the children**

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# A TIME TO ADVANCE

We invite you now to consider sharing your skills, wisdom, and ideas in one or more of the pathways we have introduced. More information and updates will be communicated in the weeks to come.

This is truly an exciting time. If each of us agrees to commit a bit of time to this initiative then we can rest assured God will lead us to become a revitalized and strengthened community of faith, ready to fully serve the

needs of our congregation and the greater community in 5 years as we celebrate our 200th Anniversary.

Please join us in this continued journey to preserve, strengthen, and innovate our community of faith. Second Presbyterian Church seeks to live boldly in the spirit of a place of worship that is always reforming for the glory of God.

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