

Executive Summary – Annual Meeting 2024

“We’ve come this far by faith, leaning on the Lord, trusting in His holy word. He never failed me yet.”

Hebrews 11:1 tells us, “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, evidence of things not seen. Reflecting on the past year, the year of hope, pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God, in 2024, the year of faith, we are continuing to embark on new ground, solid ground, looking to Almighty God, leaning and depending on Him. We have been blessed collectively and individually and we continue to stand upon the shoulders of the great men and women of God who came before us, many who walked among us. We stand steadfast upon our foundation and grab hold of our faith, embracing the future God has predestine for us, in fellowship with one another, declaring we are on the battlefield for our Lord.

In 1974 five intuitive and dedicate men, knowing our church had to be positioned to stand and operate in a changing society, they took a courageous and crucial step. On the 13th day of August 1974, we were incorporated under the laws of the State of Georgia by the Superior Court of DeKalb County. The Board of Directors is the governing body of the Corporation. As members of Beulah, you are members, you are stakeholders of the Corporation. Along with the Board of Deacons, the

Board of Trustees and the Finance Department, the Board of Directors is one of the four core leadership organizations that manage the temporal matters of the Church. Someone might be asking; what are the responsibilities of the Board of Directors.

The Responsibilities of the Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is the governing body of the church with fiduciary responsibilities. It is responsible for steering the organization towards a sustainable future by adopting and ensuring sound and effective ethical, legal governance and financial management policies of the Corporation and making sure the church has adequate resources to advance its mission.

It ensures policies and guidelines are in place to either eliminate or reduce the liabilities to the church in the areas of asset management, property management, vehicle management, child abuse and the use of equipment associated with the aforementioned areas.

At various intervals, members of this Board were passed the mantle, charged to serve; we accepted the charge, and we continue to work to ensure we are fulfilling our responsibilities.

Tonight, we will share with you the status of the 2023 priorities that were presented in the 2023 Annual Meeting. Were we successful in realizing all our

goals? As we build on our rich history, we recognize there are still existing challenges and future opportunities. Unfortunately, there is still work to do in several areas; but I am happy to say we made great gains, and I am confident that in addition to our new 2024 goals they are obtainable and will be achieved. The update is as follows:

1. Continued collaboration with the Beulah Experience Team. The team worked with focus groups in all demographics of the Church and advisory councils and developed recommendations to meet key concerns of those demographics.
2. The Board recruited and added five outstanding directors.
3. We continued to support the Pastor's vision to retire the mortgage. In keeping with our fiduciary role and responsibility; continued to work to insure the strong financial health of our church and freedom from indebtedness. Along with the Pastor, the Board developed and initiated the framework for a plan that will vigorously work to achieve this goal. You will hear more about the initiative in the near future.
4. An online *Safeguarding Against Child Abuse* training and certification initiative for all workers and volunteers was rolled out April 2023.

5. Plans for recruiting the facilitator for Strategic Plan 2.0 were begun and paused. The process will resume soon.

6. Steps are being taken to develop a succession plan for key personnel.

Our Action Plans for the Strategic Plan 2.0 and my Vision and Goals for 2024 are as follows:

Vision – Guided by the Holy Spirit under the leadership of our Pastor, working collaboratively, we aspire to demonstrate sound leadership, fostering a spirit of inclusion, working to move our church to the next level, meeting the spiritual, physical, and mental needs of the total person in all age groups.

Goals

- 1. Recruit the Strategic Planning 2.0 Facilitator and coordinate with the Facilitator and the Beulah Experience Team to address the recommendations from the Board and the Beulah focus groups, with special emphasis on our youth to foster growth, inclusion, and sustainability.**
- 2. Continued emphasis and support of the 2023 plan to retire the mortgage.**
- 3. Support the family Life Center and staff to sponsor a STEM and summer program. (Faced with a number of challenges STEM has been postponed for 2024)**

4. **Develop a succession plan for key Board positions. Prioritize attention to the Risk Management Director's responsibility for Safeguarding Against Child Abuse, Emergency & Disaster and Church insurance.**
5. **Conduct quarterly Board development training.**
6. **Accelerate succession planning for office and key church personnel.**

Strategic Plan 2.0 Action Plan & Priorities

- **Embrace Change**
- **Increase the number of tithers**

Attract New Members

- Comprehensive Marketing Plan (Go beyond our internal communication)
- Campus Outreach
- Family Centered Events -
- Mental Health Workshops (Mental health issues are real, not just in the world, but right in the walls of our churches and it is our desire to address it and help our people. As Christians, yes, we absolutely understand the power of prayer and fasting, but we know there is professional help also)
- Partner with Local School (Develop a formal program through the County School System)

Retaining Members

- Youth Visibility and Engagement (Not just on the 4th Sunday)
- Member Engagement
- Audit Effectiveness of Ministries

Teaching New & Current Members

- Refresh course offerings and rotate
- Incorporate interactive bible lessons
- Recruit and certify passionate(enthusiastic) instructors
- Rotate the instructors
- Establish on campus bible study for college students at area universities and colleges
- We will resume Tornado Evacuation, Fire Evacuation and Active Shooter training. In April we will conduct a tornado evacuation training session.

Tonight, our treasurer will present the Financial Posture of the Corporation.

Followed by that presentation, the Church Business Administrator/HR Manager will report on the Churchwide Operations. He will also provide a status report on the Beulah Experience team, the focus groups, the 2024 Operational Projects and the Performance Management Plan.

We are advancing our status as a hybrid church. There are now four classrooms that are set up for the hybrid model. We also have the capability of conducting hybrid meetings in the Conference Room in the family life center.

There is one **Governance Update**. The By-Laws were changed as follows:

Article IV – Board Membership - The Board will have up to seventeen members, - thirteen at-large members.

The Board will continue to work, demonstrating the power of “dreaming big,” craving pathways for exceptional results in our undertakings. The door of inclusion will always be open; for we know there are future trailblazers and resilient souls who are on the horizon. Even now, we see our young people in new roles, that warm our hearts. We are encouraged that their legacies will fuel their ongoing quest to make them and our church the absolute best, moving to mountain-top levels.

The Board understands the challenges that are before us, recognizing that they are very important, and some are massive. When tests arrive, we are faced with the decision to either stand or shrink, we choose to stand, endure, and not escape. Our faith needs fiber if we plan to do battle with age-old enemies like indifference and passivity. We serve a faithful and loving God, and it is our prayer that He will sustain us to finish the tasks and goals before us victoriously. We must

dwell in possibilities and believe they can be a reality. We must rise daily, put on our invisible shoes for our faith walk though we may not always know where they will take us, for we walk by faith not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7) Faith without works is dead also.

Over in Jeremiah 29:11, God's word tells us. "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end." We, the members of the Board, do not take the assignment of serving in this capacity lightly; it is a blessing from on high, that carries great responsibility. We know God has blessed the body of Beulah Baptist Church with many gifts, beautiful, brilliant, and God-fearing men, and women; and the words of Jeremiah 29:11 could apply to any one of God's choosing.

In closing, as always, I would like to thank each of you for your attendance and attention; Special thanks to those members who answered the call to participate in the Beulah Experience, the focus groups, and advisory councils; whatever contribution, we are most grateful to those voices that spoke from the heart, honestly and courageously, thank you, to our employees who are dedicated, determined and dependable, second to none. Thank you. To Pastor Black, a true man of God, for continuing to support us in our undertakings and decision making to serve this present age and the future. To this dedicated Board of Directors,

thank you for being intuitive, insightful, encouraging and positioning yourselves to work with boldness and confidence. Thank you for accepting the opportunity to gain experience and to see our goals with the eyes of faith. To each of you, my Beulah family, thank you for your prayers, your love and support. Last but certainly not least, to God Almighty. In the words of James Weldon Johnson who penned our Black National Anthem; God of our weary years, God of our silent tears; Thou who has brought us thus far on the way; Thou who has by thy might, Led us into the light. **We thank you for** Beulah Baptist Church of our past and the Beulah to come,

God, keep us in your holy hands, let us always seek you for our every need, let us hear your voice, honor your precious name and work while it is day. "My faith looks up to Thee, and yes, "We've come this far by faith, leaning on the Lord; He never failed us yet." **May God bless you and may God forever bless Beulah**

Baptist Church of DeKalb County, Inc.