

## FAITH CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP CHURCH PROFILE FOR PULPIT COMMITTEE

### ***FCF – WHO WE ARE***

Faith Christian Fellowship (FCF) is a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) located in the Pen Lucy neighborhood of Baltimore, MD. FCF was planted by Craig and Maria Garriott in 1980 with the distinctive call and vision of **celebrating the reconciling work of Jesus Christ, building grace-filled disciples and serving Pen Lucy, Baltimore and the world**. Since its formation, FCF has been and remains intentionally cross-cultural, multi-ethnic, committed to racial reconciliation on the basis of Christ's work alone, and pursuing urban Gospel ministry both in word and in deed.

The body of Christ at FCF is **broadly diverse in terms of age, race, socio-economic situation, education and neighborhood**. We consist of 226 members (and more than 90 covenant children), and are joined by attenders of about half that number, including a strong presence of college and graduate students. By a recent survey<sup>1</sup>, we are majority white (approximately 60%) and nearly 20% black. The remaining 20% of worshippers tend to be Hispanic, Asian, or multi-racial. About 16% of us were born outside of the United States. We are blessed with a committed core – over 40% of our body having attended FCF for 10 years or more. Leadership of our ministry teams intentionally reflects the diversity of the church body, including black and white pastors (Stan Long and Craig Garriott) and a Session that is half white and half non-white.

FCF was originally launched as a community church in the Pen Lucy neighborhood; however, God had other plans for us. Today, while just **17% of us reside in Pen Lucy and its adjoining neighborhoods, we are decidedly urban**, with 64% of members and regular attenders residing in Baltimore City and our outreach ministries being focused within the Pen Lucy neighborhood. In this FCF could be characterized as a **regional, intergenerational, multi-ethnic** church; a church of **community groups** scattered throughout neighborhoods of Baltimore for multiplying grace-filled disciples; a **community development** church where we strive to be good neighbors in doing justice and loving mercy in Pen Lucy; a **university and international student-reaching church** located close to three major universities (**Johns Hopkins, Morgan State and Loyola College**).

By His providence, God has made FCF into a missionary-supporting and international disciple-making church. We have supported a number of missionaries and church planters here at home and abroad; each year we watch international students and scholars who have worshipped with us return to their home countries with a cross-cultural experience in the context of a local church. Church leadership (pastors and officers) confess the Westminster Confession of Faith, but we do not (as some PCA churches do) require our members to adhere strictly to Reformed theology and the Confession. FCF also embraces a theology of reconciliation which is outlined in our **Unity Declaration** that was adopted by the church in 2000. As a congregation, we are generally well-educated with many (66% of those who filled out the survey) holding advanced collegiate degrees. Sunday worship service at FCF is a vibrant mix of Christ-centered gospel, jazz, traditional hymns, classical, and contemporary styles. Our community groups are the primary means through which members are built up in the faith and practice Christian community.

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<sup>1</sup> All percentages are derived from an informal Church Profile Survey conducted online by the FCF Pulpit Search Committee in July 2017. For a variety of reasons, including (i) limited/no internet access for some congregants and (ii) the absence of many of our college and graduate students over the summer break, the percentages appearing herein should be treated as rough estimates. Nonetheless, Session believes these percentages are sufficient to convey what we believe is an accurate description of our congregation.

### **FCF – WHO GOD IS CALLING US TO BE**

Based on a recent FCF survey<sup>2</sup>, the congregation and church leadership appear to share a common vision that God is calling the FCF body to grow in the following areas:

1. Maintaining and strengthening the preaching of God's Holy Word as divine truth for life amidst a culture captive to spiritual and moral relativity. In particular, declaring an orthodox, gospel-centered apologetic that speaks effectively to the millennial generation.
2. Continuing and growing FCF's commitment to gospel-based racial reconciliation.
3. Changing the way we "do church" so as to create a culture of discipleship, in which members are pursuing holiness and increasing in the knowledge of God, while also befriending and speaking truth and encouragement to lost people.
4. Becoming a people that, through the work of the Holy Spirit, is reliant on and constant in prayer, so that prayer becomes the centerpiece of all other ministries.
5. Developing indigenous leaders for the next generation at FCF who will be able to disciple and teach generations after them.
6. Training and equipping members individually and the body as a whole to become disciple-makers, sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with the least and the lost; supporting and sending disciple-makers to other regions of Baltimore and the world with greater intentionality.
7. Planting new churches in the Baltimore area as well as elsewhere in the world, as a deliberate, concerted initiative of the church body, with a clear understanding and acceptance of responsibilities associated with church planting.
8. Joining the incarnational work of Christ in Pen Lucy by coming alongside our neighbors in relationship and service to see the gospel and shalom of God's kingdom made known in our community.

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<sup>2</sup> Informal Church Profile Survey referenced above.



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## FCF's Mission, Vision, and Values

In brief, Faith Christian Fellowship is a:

- **gospel-centered church** celebrating the reconciling work of Christ and seeking to help men, women, and children experience his transforming grace in their lives.
- **regional, intergenerational, multi-ethnic church** of and for Baltimore.
- **church of community groups** scattered throughout neighborhoods of Baltimore, engaged in outreach and discipleship for multiplying grace filled disciples as we seek the peace and flourishing of the city.
- **community development church** in and with Pen Lucy where we strive to be good neighbors in “doing justice, loving mercy and walking humbly with God.”
- **university and international student-reaching church** to encourage the discipleship of future leaders for the city and world.
- **missional church seeking the multiplication of congregations** in other regions of Baltimore and the world.
- **praying church** as we live in utter dependence on God's grace for our lives and mission.

### Our mission and vision:

**Celebrating** the reconciling work of Jesus Christ,  
**Building** grace-filled disciples, and  
**Serving** Pen Lucy, Baltimore and the world

### Celebrating the reconciling work of Christ

*“I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.” John 17:23*

Before going to the cross, Jesus prayed that His disciples would live out the unity revealed in His divine love relationship with the Father so that the world would see and know Him. FCF exists as part of the answer to that prayer.

Baltimore, a city marked by great divisions and disparity between different races, classes, peoples, and communities, is a great place to live out this unity. Yet any power for real and sustained unity is only realized as we first celebrate and live in the reconciling love that Jesus accomplished on the cross. It was on the cross that Jesus removed the offense of our sins, reconciled us to God, and transformed us from being enemies into beloved sons and daughters. The cross unites us as one family. The power of the gospel is that “we love because He first loved us” (1 John 4:19). While the pursuit of unity is hard and requires sacrifice, unity is not fundamentally something we do. It is something He has done. Therefore, the motivation and power

for unity-building with each other flows out of our unity with Christ. Our reconciliation to God and to other believers is cause for great joy and celebration together!

We celebrate this reconciliation in our worship which we consider our weekly highpoint as a united congregation. Here we seek to bring to God our very best expressions of worship from our diverse cultures in order to be a reflection and taste of heaven (Revelation 5:9-10; 7:9-10), to be a witness of Christ's coming into the world and to reinforce His strengthening love among His people (John 17:23).

### Building grace-filled disciples

*"By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples."  
John 15:8*

Jesus focused His mission on calling a select group of culturally diverse followers to be in community with Himself and one another in order to equip them to forward His redeeming, reconciling, and restoring mission in the world. He spent time with these disciples because He loved them and had a greater dream for their lives. In the process, he developed their convictions, character, and competencies so that they might fulfill their callings for every good work. Jesus made disciples who would be equipped to make disciples. Jesus wants to do this with us.

Our high calling is to partner with Christ in equipping and encouraging every follower to love God and discover and fulfill his or her calling in His Body for the praise of His glory. We seek such a disciple making movement in our children and youth ministries, Christian education ministry, young adult ministry, university and international student ministries, men's and women's ministries, and community group ministry. We consider our community group ministry to be Faith's central disciple-making ministry.

### Serving Pen Lucy, Baltimore, and the world

*"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Acts 1:8*

Jesus commissioned His disciples to bear witness to the gospel in their local communities, region, and to the ends of the earth. At Faith we seek to be faithful to Pen Lucy, the community where we worship; Baltimore, the city where God has called us to live, work, and worship; and our world, which He loves.

In this calling, we commit to working together as a multi-ethnic body to proclaim the Good News of Jesus with biblical integrity and culturally sensitive means. We believe the Church is to embody the redemptive presence of Christ through concrete deeds of mercy and justice which affirm people's dignity, cultivate an environment of hope, and restore people to God through Christ and to service in God's Kingdom and world.

Besides encouraging strong diaconal ministry at FCF, we seek to serve Pen Lucy through the leadership of our Pen Lucy Team and PLAN (Pen Lucy Action Network), our partnering ministry for gospel-centered community development initiatives.

As Christ calls His followers to a Kingdom-sized mission beyond individual congregations and locales, we seek to make disciples by multiplying community groups with the vision of multiplying missional congregations and church plants in other regions of Baltimore, even as we encourage strong global missions.

We confess in all our attempts to faithfully fulfill God's call that we are weak and unable to advance any eternal work apart from God, who works through the prayers of His people. Therefore, the first ministry that must lead and undergird our efforts is prayer. Corporate opportunities for prayer include our Prayer Wrestlers ministry, Prayer Intercessors ministry, and annual Faith Advance Prayer and Fasting week.

We invite you to join us in this Kingdom service to be transformed and to see God's transforming work in Pen Lucy, Baltimore, and the world.

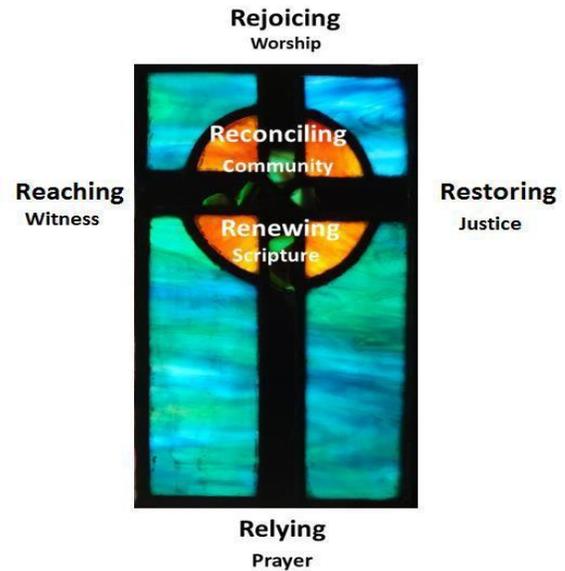
*FCF's Unity Declaration (found following, p. 6) details its commitment to celebrate diversity while maintaining unity, pursue racial justice, and invite outsiders to become part of the universal fellowship of Jesus' Kingdom.*

## Our values

The *upward* focus is in our relationship with God in worship and prayer, the foundation for all spiritual vitality.

The *inward* focus is in our relationship within the Body through our community and discipleship in grace.

The *outward* focus is in our witness in words and deeds to our communities, city, and world.



This chart clarifies a summary definition of our values and identifies ministries related to each one.

<i>Values</i>	<i>Defined</i>	<i>Ministries</i>	
<b>Rejoicing</b>	<b>Worship:</b> Growing deeper in knowing and loving God through personal worship and God glorifying, Christ-centered, believer edifying and seeker-welcoming corporate worship. <i>Eph 1:3-8; 5:18-33</i>	Worship Music Ministries	C E L E B R A T E
<b>Relying</b>	<b>Prayer:</b> Depending on God through prayer as our first and essential ministry for participating in the expansion of His Kingdom. <i>Eph 3:14-21, Eph 6:10-18</i>	Prayer Wrestlers Prayer Movement Team Prayer Intercessors	
<b>Reconciling</b>	<b>Unity:</b> Loving God is revealed in our love for one another across the divides of class, culture and race through biblical fellowship, repentance and commitment to unity. <i>Eph 2:8-9; Eph 4:3-4</i>	Unity Team Community Groups New City Network Presbyterian Church in America	B U I L D
<b>Renewing</b>	<b>Discipleship:</b> Christian growth toward maturity through personal and corporate Bible to life study, spiritual gift awareness, strategic service and small group fellowship. <i>Rom 12:2, Eph 4:11-23, Eph 2:10</i>	Children's Ministry Christian Education Women's Ministry	
<b>Reaching</b>	<b>Mission:</b> Local outreach to Pen Lucy and Baltimore through personal and corporate witness, cultural renewal, multi-site & church planting movements, as well as global missions to the world. <i>Eph 3:8-10, Eph 6:19-20</i>	Connections Team University Connections Youth Ministry Young Adults Ministry World Missions	S E R V E
<b>Restoring</b>	<b>Justice:</b> Doing justice and loving mercy through crisis relief and Christian community development. <i>Eph 1:18-23, Eph 5: 13-17, Eph 6:5-9; Micah 6:8</i>	Pen Lucy Team Pen Lucy Action Network (PLAN) Springfield Fellowship House	

## **FCF UNITY DECLARATION**

(Adopted by Faith Christian Fellowship, PCA, May 20, 2000)

### **UNITY DECLARATION STATEMENT 1: Our Fundamental Identity**

We declare that God our Father, in His great love, has redeemed us by sending His Son Jesus Christ and united us as people, by His blood, from diverse cultures into one family through the Holy Spirit committing to us the message of reconciliation. John 17:20-24; 20:17; Eph 2:13,14;19-22; Rev 5:9,10 Col 3:11; Gal 3:26-29; Eph 4:4,5; Acts 2:5-12, 2Cor.5:19

### **UNITY DECLARATION STATEMENT 2: Cultural Affirmation**

We declare that God's truth transcends culture and speaks to all cultures. We affirm the Biblical value, dignity and distinctions of our varying cultures because God uses culture to communicate His truth and grace and receives glory from our cultural expressions. Yet we acknowledge that God declares the fallen condition of all people and their cultures. We claim a personal and corporate responsibility to evaluate and bring Christ-centered reformation to our cultures and society by the Word of God in dependence on the Holy Spirit. Gen.1:26,28; 2:15,19; Rom. 8:18-25; Rom. 1:18-32; Rom 3:9-20; Rev 21:24; 1Cor 9:19-23; Acts 17:16, 22-31; John 17:15-19; Matt. 5:27-43

### **UNITY DECLARATION STATEMENT 3: Repentance & Forgiveness**

We acknowledge that great transgressions based on race, gender, class and faith have tragically marked our life together as a human family throughout the history of the world and this nation. While the Church has pursued justice and reconciliation, regrettably it has often participated in this sin through active support or indifference. We join with those believers who confess that true reconciliation cannot be realized without a commitment to repentance, forgiveness and the pursuit of justice. Neh 1:4-11; Dan 9:4-19; Eph 4:1-6, 32; Phil 2:1-11; Acts 6:1-7

### **UNITY DECLARATION STATEMENT 4: Necessity Of Grace**

We seek to apply God's grace to our lives. His grace enables us to love God with all our being and our neighbor as ourselves. God's grace provides the only means to conquer our fears, remove our guilt, resolve our anger and give us the strength to persevere as one family where Jesus Christ is Lord. We declare that the Holy Spirit is our only source of power for true unity in the Body, and that He strengthens us through daily repentance, prayer and the cleansing power of the Word. Matt. 22:37-40; Eph 3:14-19; 4:1-5; 5:1,2,15-21; 6:10,11; Heb 2:14,15; 1Peter 4:19

### **UNITY DECLARATION STATEMENT 5: Cultural Awareness**

We commit ourselves to acquiring greater cultural awareness and sensitivity, starting first with our own cultural bias and prejudices, recognizing that we live in a multicultural city and world. We believe that cultural awareness is foundational to the way in which we develop leaders, conduct worship, equip the body for evangelism and discipleship, and promote justice and community development. 1Cor 9:19-23; Acts 15:19-21; Acts 17:16-34; Acts 26:28,29; Rom 15:1-4

### **UNITY DECLARATION STATEMENT 6: Leadership**

We commit ourselves to modeling the reconciliation of culturally diverse believers before the world in our church and ministry leadership. We promote reconciled leadership which understands and values church membership, the unity of the Church, spiritual accountability, the benefit of ethnic diversity, shared servant leadership, cross cultural skills, strategic service,

sound theology, godly character, spiritual renewal, and discipling emerging leaders. Luke 6:12-16; Acts 6:1-7; 13:1-3; Gal 2:2; Isa 56:1-8; Rev 21:24

#### **UNITY DECLARATION STATEMENT 7: Worship**

We declare that as a reconciled community in Christ we work in our worship services to represent God's Kingdom in our local context. We work to offer God our most precious and valuable expressions of devotion from our varying cultures. Such worship requires the pursuit of excellence as we glorify God in a Christ-centered, believer edifying and seeker welcoming service. Rom 15:5-11; Isa 19:23; Zeph 3:9; Ps 22:27; Rev 7:9,10; Rev 21:24

#### **UNITY DECLARATION STATEMENT 8: Evangelism**

We commit ourselves to work together as a multi-ethnic body to proclaim Good News that communicates Christ to people in their particular cultures with Biblical integrity through culturally sensitive means. 1Cor 9:19-23; 10:33; Matt 20:26-28; Rom 1:14; 2Cor 4:5; Prov 11:30; Rom 11:14; 1Pet 3:1

#### **UNITY DECLARATION STATEMENT 9: Discipleship**

We declare that as we disciple one another towards Christian maturity, we must obey Christ's command to love our neighbors as ourselves. We do this by keeping the unity of the Spirit, who indwells believers of diverse and historically separated cultures, in the bond of peace. Eph 2:11-22; Eph 4:1-4; 11-16; Phil 2:1-5; Col 3:5-14; John 17:23; Rom 14:17-19; 1Cor 1:10; 2Cor 13:11

#### **UNITY DECLARATION STATEMENT 10: Justice & Community Development**

We declare that the church is called to be the redemptive presence of Christ by proclaiming Good News which is demonstrated through concrete deeds of mercy and justice. This Good News affirms dignity, cultivates an environment of hope, and restores people to God through Christ and to service in God's kingdom. Micah 6:8; Luke 4:18,19; Acts 6:1-7; Gal 2:10; James 2:1-9