

Vision Report

2026

A reflection on
where we've been,
and a guide for
where God is
leading us.



**VIDALIA
CORNERSTONE
CHURCH**

Prepared by the
Transitional Focus Team

VCC Mission Statement

***“To make disciples of Jesus Christ by Worshiping God,
Growing in Faith, Serving in Love and Reaching One More.”***

Worshiping God

We worship God with our whole lives, loving Him above all and honoring Him together as His church.

Hebrews 10:24-25

“²⁴ And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, ²⁵ not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”

- We connect with God through our worship and praise. The goal is to create a community of inspiring worship between a modern and traditional service. We facilitate two worship services each Sunday morning: Modern Worship at 9 am and Traditional Worship at 11 am. In each service, our worship leaders strive to guide the congregation in a way that honors and glorifies the Lord. According to Jesus in John 4:23, “...the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him.” Therefore, we long to worship in a way that is sincere and genuine. We also want to worship based on the truth of Scripture - submitting to the authority and sovereignty of the Holy Trinity revealed through God’s Word.
- Intentional prayer is encouraged as a congregation, in small groups, through requests and personally. We worship and praise together through good and challenging times, as a community.
- Modern worship, in our Activity Center, includes a praise band, praise songs, scripture-based sermons, and holy communion. Traditional service, in our sanctuary, is a more traditional setting with chancel choir, piano, organ, scripture-based sermons, holy communion, and reciting the Apostles' Creed and praying the Lord’s Prayer.

Growing in Faith

We continuously grow as disciples by learning God’s Word, praying together, and becoming more like Jesus.

2 Peter 1:5-9

“⁵ For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge;⁶ and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; ⁷ and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. ⁸ For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ But whoever does not have them is nearsighted and blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their past sins.”

At Vidalia Cornerstone Church, our mission is to grow as disciples by devoting ourselves to God’s Word, prayer, and life together—becoming more like Christ. Growth means learning to obey all that Jesus commanded. Through biblical teaching, spiritual disciplines, and authentic community, we mature in faith and are equipped to live out the gospel every day. These are some of the ways our church specifically seeks to fulfill this aspect of the mission: weekly Bible studies, meaningful worship services, small group engagement, churchwide fellowship, Christian counseling, making connections and developing godly relationships within the congregation, discipleship classes, mentorship, Sunday school, etc. We are all called to walk alongside one another as we share burdens, edify, encourage, correct, forgive, and enjoy one another as we walk with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We would be delighted for you to join us as we all make this journey together.

Serving in Love

We serve others in love, meeting real needs and reflecting the compassion of Christ.

Acts 1:8

“⁸ 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.” Serving is how love for our neighbor becomes visible. We use our gifts, resources, and time to care for one another and our community, demonstrating the self-giving love of Jesus. We serve in love by caring for one another and meeting needs in our church and community.

Vidalia Cornerstone Church demonstrates Christ's selfless, sacrificial love through tangible actions — not just words. We meet real needs with humility, compassion, and by showing people they are valued because God values them. We serve as the Hands and Feet of Jesus by serving within Vidalia Cornerstone, in the community of Vidalia, and in areas beyond Vidalia, Georgia.

Serving *within* Vidalia Cornerstone - We invest in the VCC body of believers through acts of service like organizing meal trains; providing transportation for medical visits; making home visits; assisting with home repairs/maintenance; and, by creating support groups that address grief, addiction recovery, or marital concerns. We also provide hospitality and inclusion of visitors to VCC by creating a welcoming, hospitable environment through rotating teams of greeters; in requesting information for making follow-up contacts; by providing a variety of small group options; and, in making fellowship meals available to all. Each effort is made with the intention of being multi-generational as well as inclusive of varying backgrounds and life situations.

Serving *in the Community* of Vidalia We invest in the community by partnering with local schools, food banks, abuse shelters, addiction ministries and nursing home facilities such as: Rachel's House, Imago Dei, the Dream Center, The Refuge, Sweet Onion Center...just to name a few. (Place link here to Missions Report list on website) Financial support is directed toward Vidalia Cornerstone's own **Cornerstone Children's Center** ministry, a full-time daycare center, and our **Second Blessings** ministry, where donated goods fund local missions and the Gospel is shared through acts of service.

Serving *beyond* Vidalia by supporting missionaries financially, sending volunteers for short-term teams, and in collecting supplies for dissemination in other areas beyond Vidalia, Georgia.

God created you for a specific purpose and has equipped you with unique gifts and passions to serve people and share God's love with them. Discover your spiritual gifts and how to use them to make a difference through serving and loving others at Vidalia Cornerstone and in your everyday life.

Reaching One More

We reach one more by sharing the gospel and inviting others to follow Jesus—locally and beyond.

1 Peter 3:15

¹⁵ But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, ...

"Reaching One More" emphasizes a personal, persistent passion for seeing even one additional life transformed by Jesus. Empowered by Christ's authority and the Holy Spirit, we intentionally share our faith, welcome new people, and trust God to draw others into a saving relationship with Jesus.

Another key purpose of Vidalia Cornerstone is to reach out to people who are outside the family of God. Every day, we rub shoulders with people who are just an invite away from a life-changing encounter with Christ. Invite your friends, family, neighbors, and co-workers to be a part of Vidalia Cornerstone so they will hear and understand what it means to be a disciple of Christ. It is a culture

where every member sees themselves as a witness who prays for, builds relationships with, and shares the Gospel with people far from God — one person at a time.

Vidalia Cornerstone Church encourages members to pray regularly for unsaved friends/family/neighbors/co-workers ("one more"), invite them to church events, share their own story of faith naturally in conversations, and be ready to explain the Gospel when opportunities arise.

We host family-friendly events, such as Parables in the Park (kids), family movie nights, JOY (Just Older Youth) fellowship activities, Fellowship in the Park (youth). All designed to build bridges to the unchurched in our community.

A key focus is multi-generational disciple-making training and equipping every age group (children, youth, adults) to share their faith; mentoring new believers one-on-one; and celebrating stories of "one more" who comes to Christ during services or small groups.

For Website:

At Vidalia Cornerstone Church, our mission is simple and bold: to fulfill the Great Commission— ***To make disciples of Jesus Christ*** (Matthew 28:19–20). This mission shapes everything we do, guiding our core values of ***Worshiping God, Growing in Faith, Serving in Love and Reaching One More.***

Vidalia Cornerstone Church Vision Statement

Vidalia Cornerstone Church seeks to be a Christ-centered congregation that is intentionally connected to God, one another, and the world.

Ephesians 3:20–21 Glory to God, who is able to do infinitely more than we could ask or imagine by his power at work within us; glory to Him in the church and in Jesus Christ for all generations, forever and always.

We will:

- Equip the church body to engage in intentional evangelism, service, and outreach individually and in partnership with other churches and community organizations.
- Encourage unity, fellowship, and discipleship by connecting members through meaningful small groups and church-wide interactions.
- Provide diverse opportunities for spiritual growth that lead believers toward Christian maturity.
- Maintain and develop an attractive, inviting, and functional campus that supports the current and future needs of our church and community.
- Utilize relevant and effective communication methods to reach all generations within our church and throughout our community.
- Foster a welcoming church family that lovingly supports visitors, new members, and those who are unable to attend.
- Acknowledge and prioritize the essential role of regular prayer, both individually and corporately.
- Invest in our local community through prayer, invitation, volunteerism, and sharing the Word of God.
- Focus intentionally on development and support of children of all ages and youth in our church and community by providing Christ-centered programs, ministries, and facilities.
- Recognize and pursue opportunities for global outreach beyond our local community.
- Develop, support, and expand staffing to meet the spiritual, educational, and administrative needs of our congregation.
- Encourage and provide support for staff in ongoing educational and theological growth.
- Celebrate and trust that God has a plan for our church and for each individual, committing ourselves to continually seek and follow His will.

VCC Heritage Transition Focus Team

Final Report

Members: Ann Todd (Chair), Mac Jordan, Nancy Peterson, James Lowe, Mary Kay Thompson, Joan Hutcheson

The recorded history of our church from 1891-2020 has been preserved in three time periods by various church historians. This committee summarized years 2020-2025 from information in annual conference reports. Our committee has been inspired by the very rich history of our church and desires to share that information with all. By consensus, all members felt it was important to leave the history in its original format and to make the full history available to all. We have requested that the recorded documents be digitized and available through the church website. They are also available in our church library in printed form.

We have focused on how our history may inspire us to move forward into the future. We looked at major events in the life of the church as well as trends that run throughout our history, particularly the ones that make us unique and therefore define us in the community.

Our church was organized in 1891 and moved into the first church building in 1903. The church moved into the second building in 1920, completed the education building in 1961, and constructed the current sanctuary in 1974. The ground breaking for the activity center was in 1996 and the Cornerstone Children's Center building was added in 2013. We have also added property to our campus as it became available purchasing the Bland property in 1986, the NeSmith property in 1994, the Tobacco Warehouse and adjacent property on Hwy 280 in the early 2000's.

Although the investment in buildings and property to support future growth is impressive, the ministry, programs, and outreach of the church is even more impressive. Communicating the word of God has always been paramount---- the church was broadcast on the radio in 1947, had a tape ministry in 1985 and began broadcasting on cable TV in the early 2000's. Our services have evolved with the times, also. In 1990 a 9:00 traditional service was added with a goal of being less formal. For many years our church had two morning services and an evening worship service. When the 9:00 am contemporary FUEL service began in 2010, we also had a traditional 8:30 and 11:00 service with Sunday School in between. Currently having two morning services, both live streamed, that are distinctly different in style but consistent in message is one of the unique qualities of our church.

Several trends were identified by our committee that were prevalent throughout the history of the church and define who we are:

- Our pastors preach the Word of God
- We are a praying church
- We are a mission minded church, locally and globally
- Our church is responsive to community needs

- Music is an important worship element
- We have always had strong leadership
- Emphasis on women as church leaders
- Our leaders are also leaders in the community
- Focus on Youth and Children's ministries
- We have had strong financial support and leadership
- We have hosted many revivals, events, concerts, etc.
- Outside consultants have been engaged at pivotal times

Although there are too many to list, a few events that support the trends we identified include Holy Week services, Easter Sunrise services, live portrayal of the Crucifixion, Disciple Bible Study, Wednesday night Bible Study (now Restore), lay visitation ministry, hosted two hurricane evacuations (Floyd and Matthew), hosted the Power Team, Second Saturday Serve, Amen Kitchen, JOY Fellowship, Fall Festival, Pumpkin Patch, National Day of Prayer, Ladies Christmas Dinners, Women's Conference IF, and many more. Our church had hosted dozens of evangelists and spiritual leaders who have led revivals and conducted conferences and training. On many occasions we have partnered with other churches in the community to make a greater impact. We have sent many mission teams locally, in the U.S., and to countries all over the world to assist those in need. Remembering these ministries and their impact for the Kingdom prompts us to look forward with anticipation to God's plan for our church in the future.

This committee recommends a Historian be appointed to continue with written history. We noted that most of the information in our history has been gleaned from the reports of staff and committee chairmen included in our annual conference report. We recommend that those reports continue.

Full history attached.

Distinctive Characteristics of Vidalia Cornerstone Church

Worship

- We offer two distinct worship services—traditional and contemporary—to honor different preferences while creating accessible, Christ-centered opportunities for people to engage in worship.
- Our worship gatherings are grounded in biblically faithful teaching and preaching that exalts God and points people to the truth of His Word.

Grow

- We are committed to teaching God's Word and discipling all age groups through thriving ministries that nurture spiritual growth and maturity.
- As an intergenerational, family-focused church, we intentionally care for and support our members through every season of life.
- We value sincerity and authenticity in our faith, cultivating a church culture where people are known, valued, and encouraged to grow in their walk with Christ.

Serve

- We intentionally and urgently respond to the needs of others within our church and community, seeking to reflect Christ's compassion through action.
- Our church is committed to the safety and security of all who enter our doors, creating a welcoming and protected environment for worship, fellowship, and service.
- We utilize modern technology to strengthen our ministries and equip our congregation to serve effectively.

Reach

- We genuinely desire to show others that they belong in our church family, extending hospitality and grace to all who walk through our doors.
- With a diverse group of leaders and a wide range of gifts and strengths, we are uniquely positioned to reach and serve our community in meaningful and impactful ways.
- We are committed to supporting missions both locally and globally, partnering with God's work to share the gospel beyond our immediate context.
- Through the intentional use of technology, we extend our reach to people inside and outside the church, connecting more individuals to the message of Christ.

Transitional Focus Teams

Opportunities and Challenges Team

Opportunities

- Use healthy financial reserves and annual giving to glorify God and carry out His plan for VCC
- Continue to maintain sound condition of facilities and property
- Tap into and engage the faithful core of active members in the implementation of church priorities by encouraging volunteer service
- Empower and evaluate the appropriate number of dedicated and capable staff
- Equip disciples and increase their impact through Disciple Bible Study and small group ministries
- Collaborate and engage with area philanthropies and churches to meet the needs of the local community

Challenges

- Design a governance structure that is efficient and effective with clearly delineated roles and responsibilities creating accountability to reflect congregational priorities
- Determine priorities for church action based on mission and vision and create a long range (at least 5-year) plan that increases the likelihood that church priorities will be met or exceeded
- Identify and employ multiple avenues for communication of church priorities, actions, outcomes, and next steps
- Increase transparency in church decisions and initiatives, thereby increasing member understanding and trust
- Create disciples among the unchurched and disenfranchised
- Choose applicable metrics to measure progress achieving the church's mission and vision
- Facilitate congregational knowledge of the operational aspects of the Cornerstone Children's Center and promote and clarify its alignment with the mission of the church.
- Examine and evaluate existing campus and facilities to ensure they fully support the mission and vision of the church
- Explore potential disadvantages an independent church faces in fulfilling the commandment to "spread the gospel to all the nations of the world" as compared to belonging to an association of churches

Vidalia Cornerstone Church

Health Assessment Summary

Based on group feedback, VCC is widely perceived as a **generally healthy church with strong core ministries**, alongside several **clear challenges and growth opportunities**. The input below has been consolidated, corrected, and organized into major themes for clarity and ease of review.

Overall Health Snapshot

General Consensus: Healthy, with areas that need intentional strengthening

Strengths Noted Across Groups: - Solid, God-loving staff and leadership core - Strong commitment to biblical teaching - High engagement in youth and children's ministries - Generous congregation with available resources - Willingness to learn, grow, and serve - Positioned well (location, facilities, finances) to impact the community

Key Opportunities

1. Outreach & Evangelism

- Expand hands-on outreach and intentional evangelism
 - Training members on *how* to evangelize and share their faith
 - Community engagement opportunities:
 - Park outreach
 - Downtown events (with purpose of witnessing)
 - Red Bird missions
 - Local missions and service projects
 - Outreach to lower-income families (e.g., VBS)
 - Support for shut-ins, elderly, and crisis needs
 - Reach the unchurched and those “unlike us” in the community
 - Create a focused evangelism team or role
-

2. Missions (Local & Global)

- Strong participation and opportunity in:
 - Guatemala mission trips
 - Local missions partnerships

- Second Blessings Thrift Store
 - Restore ministry
 - Opportunity to better connect missions efforts with church-wide participation
 - Increased collaboration with other ministries and churches (locally and globally)
-

3. Children, Youth & Families

- Cornerstone Children's Center (CCC):
 - Reaches many families in the community
 - Strong opportunity for discipleship and outreach
 - Strong youth and children's programs already in place
 - Opportunities to:
 - Expand children's church (potentially through 3rd grade)
 - Increase space for kids and youth activities
 - Improve transition from student to disciple/teacher
 - Engage CCC and daycare families more intentionally
-

4. Young Adults & Age-Specific Ministries

- Need for targeted ministry for:
 - Young adults (ages 20–40)
 - Single adults
 - College students
 - Young married couples
 - Expand Sunday School and small groups by life stage
 - Encourage intergenerational ministry and relationships
-

5. Worship, Discipleship & Fellowship

- Two worship expressions (traditional and contemporary) as a strength
 - Talented worship and music ministry
 - Choir, Bible studies, disciple studies, and Wednesday night gatherings
 - Wednesday nights as a unique opportunity to unite both services
 - Encourage deeper discipleship and leadership development
-

6. Leadership Development & Governance

- Establish a clear leadership and governance structure as an independent church
- Define roles, accountability, and decision-making processes

- Equip and empower church members to lead
 - Increase male involvement in leadership
 - Clarify bylaws and church structure for the congregation
-

7. Staffing, Volunteers & Engagement

- Need for:
 - Additional church staff as ministries grow
 - Nursery Director
 - Fully staffed ministry teams
 - Ongoing challenge to recruit, train, and retain volunteers
 - Encourage every member to serve in some capacity
 - Address complacency and increase participation
-

8. Communication & Organization

- Improve internal communication:
 - Clear, consistent updates
 - Better use of website and digital tools
 - Need for better organization, planning, and systems
 - Develop a long-range vision and strategic plan
 - Track metrics, accomplishments, and ministry impact
 - Improve vetting systems and scheduling for volunteers
-

9. Facilities, Space & Resources

- Facility and space constraints, especially for children and youth
 - Building updates and organization needed
 - Opportunity to leverage central and large location
 - Guidance needed on how to steward budget surplus effectively
-

10. Unity, Culture & Identity

- Strengthen unity and togetherness across generations
 - Navigate being a multi-generational and diverse congregation
 - Address differing expectations within the church family
 - Build stronger connections with other churches and ministries
-

Key Challenges (Consolidated)

- Securing and onboarding the right lead pastor
 - Defining leadership, governance, and structure post-UMC
 - Volunteer shortages and engagement
 - Staffing limitations
 - Communication gaps
 - Reaching young adults and unchurched individuals
 - Space constraints for growth
 - Lack of long-term planning and measurable metrics
 - Establishing external connections as an independent church
-

Closing Insight

VCC is viewed as **well-positioned for meaningful growth and community impact**. The congregation is generous, engaged, and spiritually motivated. Addressing leadership clarity, communication, staffing, and intentional outreach will help unlock the next season of ministry effectiveness.

Values Inventory Survey Results

Pastor Jose Caraballo emailed the Transitional Committee members on January 6, 2026 requesting they complete the Values Inventory Survey and return those at the first meeting on January 11, 2026 led by Dr. Steven Echols. Seventy-one (71) surveys were collected and here are the following results.

MOST IMPORTANT

Preaching/ teaching scrip. 3.94

Prayer 3.82

Worship 3.79

Bible Knowledge 3.73

Giving 3.63

Cooperation 3.62

Excellence 3.59

Community 3.58

Fellowship 3.58

Obedience 3.56

IMPORTANT

Benevolence 3.55

Evangelism 3.51

Encouragement 3.46

Family 3.35

Lost People 3.34

Leadership 3.3

Team Ministry 3.23

Mobilized Laity 3.21

Innovation 3.11

Cultural Relevance 3.04

SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT

Initiative 2.93

World Missions 2.9

Creativity 2.83

Tradition 2.63

Status Quo 2.4

Survey completed January 28, 2026