

Vision 2020

Can you imagine? Partnering with the living God to touch hundreds of lives in a short span of time with the life-giving gospel of Jesus? You have.

Would you like to experience what satisfaction and joy comes when people from diverse races and nations, both rich and poor, gather together as one family to worship and serve and love the One who has redeemed them? You have.

Would you like to participate in an educational process in which those studying at the highest institutions in the land wash the feet of those who score at the bottom of the charts, and those who can hardly read teach scholars how to make so much of having so little? You have.

You have been that partner with us and even with God, as a part of the Bethel family, whether from near or far.

We began Bethel's south side congregation six years ago, and we've been humbled time and again as God's generosity and provision has flowed through your hearts and hands to allow us to minister to a church and community of largely students at the University of Chicago and residents of the surrounding south side neighborhood. Your lives and labors of love have provided life to the Bethel family.



You know what glimpses of grace and tastes of truth we've shared, in seeing the kingdom of God breaking in and breaking down barriers, where all colors and classes of people worship and serve Jesus together.



But our goal has always been to be as healthy and influential as possible. A persuasive and biblical argument could be made that the healthiest model in church planting and missions in general, from a stewardship perspective, is that after the start up with the generous support of seed money from financially stable churches, a young church plant will grow into a productive, fruitful work of God's Spirit so that missions money can be redirected to other new ventures.

Bethel is presently two congregations of one church, at both the north and south sides of Chicago; our goal has always been to be a multiplying church planting movement. We want to see our people and our local community refreshed by God's gospel, but also we want to be like flowing waters that channel God's grace and truth through many tributaries to new works which can be traced back upstream to our faithfulness, further back to yours, and ultimately, to the headwaters and living fountain of God's unending springs of grace. To be a catalyst for gospel-growth takes strength in weakness.



We've been sensing over the past couple of years that we may need to find a new meeting space to have a more consistent, stable, visible, available place for ministry. Our present rental space on the University of Chicago campus is beautiful, inexpensive and convenient to students, but it is not always available and at most, only once per week. We are regularly hindered to do more ministry without a regular space. We've outgrown most of our back-up options and are nearing capacity at the regular site.

We also sense that to grow with more stable families and long-term residents of the community, meeting off-campus would be a definite advantage, especially given the negative view that some neighborhood residents have of the University because of what is seen as an institutional devouring of the area.

Need and opportunity are converging like never before in our congregation's life. Despite looking long and hard for rental options in the area, those plans have been frustrated, not the least by price. More than ever, we are eager to take a step of faith that could keep us within walking distance of the University and yet plant us firmly in the neighborhood to continue the work that Christ has begun through us, the work to bridge two very different worlds by gospel grace.



But imagine if a building was available at an relatively low price, a long-term space, that if purchased, could help pay for itself and strengthen the overall goal for self-sustainability as a church. We think we've found such a spot. But we need your help so that the vision might become a reality.

Vision 2020 is a goal, to use the words of the prophet Isaiah, to lengthen the cords, drive deeper the stakes of this tent, Bethel, which means house of God. The vision is that our church would be more influential, missional, sustainable than ever before, and even self-supporting in the year 2020.

6414 S Cottage Grove Ave is just one mile from our present worship space and the campus of the University of Chicago.



The building is 5700 sq feet ground level space that would be used for ministry. But what makes this venture possible for us financially, is an entrepreneurial element: above the ministry space are four apartments, each with two bedrooms and one bath, that can be rented to church members or neighbors at a very affordable price, generating income to repay loans and eventually help fund the overall ministry of the church.

We've watched the price of this property fall over three years from \$570,000 to \$215,000. We think we can offer significantly less than the asking price, because the building needs a complete rehab. We plan to hire a contractor and also request donated labor from teams and individuals to revitalize it as a trophy of God's transforming power in a neighborhood that's receiving a face lift as well. We want to flourish like a garden in the city, and recycling a building is a green ministry!

Estimated total purchase and rehab costs are \$560,000
We'll apply for a loan for purchase and rehab of \$246,000

We seek to raise an additional \$314,000 from the following:

Mission to North America loan	\$80,000
Bethel Christian Church (south)	\$50,000
Churches and Presbyteries	\$65,000
Gifts	\$25,000
Personal loans (2% return)	\$60,000
Bethel Church alumni	\$12,000
Bethel Church members	\$22,000

We will work in two phases:

Phase 1: rehab the apartments completely and rough-in plumbing and electric for ministry space; begin renting apartments to generate income (months 0-6)

Phase 2: finish rehabbing ministry space for use (months 6-9)

We'd break even on all building expenses vis. rental income. Within ten year, we project to be self-sufficient.

There's also a partner, Sunshine Gospel Ministries, that might share the building, and thus the expense, with us, which would greatly help, though is not necessary to move forward.



We are very excited and very aware that something of this scope for a church our size is only possible if God is pleased to place all the pieces in order. Would you consider praying & partnering?

There are three ways to partner:

- ❖ One-time gift or annual pledge for a number of years
- ❖ Invest \$5000, 10,000, 15,000 or 20,000 in the project, to be repaid in 10 years with 2% interest
- ❖ Help with labor on the building once purchased

Gifts may be made online at www.Bethelcc.net or mailed to:
Bethel Christian Church – Vision 2020
c/o Shannon Beier
6352 S Ingleside Ave
Chicago, IL 60637

