

**VLC Adopts 2021 Budget, New CMBA Grant Guidelines**

CMBA’s Visionary Leadership Community (VLC) met Tuesday, Sept. 15, for its monthly session at North Trenholm Baptist Church in Columbia to share updates and conduct business. Comprised of CMBA ministers and lay leaders, the VLC operates under the association’s vision of “starting and strengthening congregations to serve as vital and vibrant missional communities.” Executive Director George Bullard and VLC Chair Ant Frederick conducted the meeting.

Of note, the VLC voted to approve the 2021 budget and guidelines to the new Our One Priority Congregational Grant, approved in August. The grant fund will give member churches and network connection churches greater access to CMBA funds when applied to specific missions and ministries, and guidelines are in place for how the VLC approve allocation of the funds. Grant types include pastoral training or educational scholarships, replanting or starting new congregational expressions, leadership evangelism or ministries, hunger and other community impact ministries. The typical individual grant amount is $500 with a maximum annual total of $1,200. Interested member churches and network connection churches should inquire by sending a request for information to CMBA@ColumbiaMetro.org.

In other news, the VLC voted to approve two part-time independent contract workers with the CMBA. Kyndra Bremer begins her work as the new Our One Priority Assistant on Sept. 16. Bremer will handle essential administrative duties for the association, be the administrator of the master database plus various software and online and digital applications, assist in data collection including the Annual Church Profile. Bremer brings extensive media and communications experience from previous roles at Midlands institutions including Ben Lippen School and Columbia International University.

The VLC approved a new Our One Priority Mobilizer role for Robbie McAlister whose work will focus on church planting within the CMBA. A former church planter and pastor, McAlister will address critical needs including starting congregations, spiritual movement, sponsoring congregations, congregational planting teams, starting congregations resources, starting congregations glocally and leading edge thriving congregations. McAlister has served people groups missionally at home and abroad through his roles with the South Carolina Baptist Convention and other global refugee network initiatives. He will begin his work in a limited capacity beginning Oct. 1 with plans to increase his time commitment in Jan. 2021.

The VLC will reconvene Oct. 20 at North Trenholm.