

**Ministry Strategy Work Groups, Grant Updates Presented to VLC**

CMBA’s Visionary Leadership Community (VLC) met virtually on Tuesday, Feb. 16, to conduct business and share ministry updates. 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 newly-elected VLC Leader Jacob Helsley conducted the meeting.

VLC members heard about a new way CMBA staff and contract workers have been organized to better meet the needs of churches through targeted service that is in addition to their regular responsibilities. Grouped by personality and spiritual giftedness, Bullard explained that the squads will help CMBA to “move deeper and broader to express our strategy.” The relational Blue Squad members will be in regular contact with churches to communicate services and collect updated data or other information. The Orange Squad will work with leading edge church factors and make meaningful contacts with CMBA pastors. The Green Squad will focus on long-term strategies to significantly impact churches, including working closely on the CMBA’s Denominee Journey and the Thriving Congregations Team. The Purple Squad’s focus will be on new congregational expression goals, which are to have 30 new expressions by the end of 2030.

VLC members were invited to participate in a survey sent to CMBA churches to gather ministry lessons learned during the pandemic. Responses will be compiled and available to share so that churches across the Midlands may benefit. Members of CMBA and Church Network Connection churches are invited to click the following hyperlink to participate in the [CMBA Survey.](https://na01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fforms.gle%2FB3myJW16mDdZ3tRc6&data=04%7C01%7C%7C23fd6910f61b48a342aa08d8d1b961ce%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C637489941429075260%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=mY4TH4HpHfW8jp2sclOx7X5UMR3ZumoIelcjwgU%2F8M8%3D&reserved=0)

VLC heard CMBA financial reports, and ministry reports from Columbia-area Baptist Collegiate Ministry Director Jamie Rogers and Cathy Locklear, CMBA ministry mobilizer. Locklear shared updates on hunger ministry partnerships, the newly renovated Block Party trailer and CMBA churches’ generous response to the Prisoner Packet collection.

Several grant-related items of business were discussed. Bullard pointed VLC members to the online donation process, which includes an option to give directly to the Congregational Resource Grant Fund. He noted recurring offerings may be applied to this collection, which funds congregational grants to new church plants, among other important ministries. Financially contributing member churches may formally request grants through the CMBA, which then presents requests to the VLC for approval. The VLC voted to approve $500 grants for Eau Claire Baptist’s hunger ministries and to Woodfield Park Baptist.

The VLC will reconvene Mar. 16.