

**Citing Covid Concerns, VLC Conducts Virtual Meeting**

The CMBA Visionary Leadership Community (VLC) conducted business and shared ministry updates virtually on Tuesday, August 17. This was the group’s first meeting since the announcement that all CMBA-related gatherings will be held virtually until at least mid-September, at which time current Covid data will be reevaluated.

During the meeting VLC members heard Team Huddle reports from its subgroups regarding ongoing work with CMBA churches through Our One Priority to “start and strengthen congregations to serve as vital and vibrant missional communities.” These targeted ministry areas include ongoing relationships with congregations, engaging leadership and congregations pursuing innovative missional engagement, future capacity building and new congregational expressions.

VLC approved several recommendations:

* A $1,000 grant was approved for Belmont Baptist for facility modifications related to it hosting the CMBA Food Pantry and City of Refuge, the new church plant pastored by JayWill Wilson.
* A $500 grant was approved for Woodfield Park Baptist for coaching-related expenses during its Covenant Congregational Pilgrimage relationship with CMBA as part of the ongoing work of the Thriving Congregations Team.
* To receive Discovery Church, a replant of Killian Baptist, as a Church Network Connection.
* For CMBA to enter into a partnership with Columbia International University (CIU) that would include relationship-building among CMBA churches and CIU ministerial students, specialized financial aid and a targeted communication plan.
* VLC members voted to authorize George Bullard to sign documents for the transfer of Good Hope Baptist to Preservation South Carolina, which will maintain its historical and sacred significance related to the national historic registry. The 2019 corporate resolution of Good Hope was signed by the 2019 CMBA officers acting as trustees for CMBA.

VLC voted on a part-time interim Impacting Communities Mobilizer serving from September 1, 2021, to August 31, 2022. Cathy Locklear will formally retire as Impacting Communities Mobilizer on August 31, 2021. The interim will lead the continuation of ministry and a future CMBA executive director may hire a permanent replacement. VLC members voted to extend Locklear’s relationship with CMBA through the role of One Priority Mobilizer from September 1, 2021, to December 31, 2021, which will allow for the continued transfer of knowledge to the interim Mobilizer.

In other personnel news, VLC voted to create a Cathy Locklear Love Offering fund. All gifts received to this fund will be presented to Locklear at her retirement reception on October 7 at Cedar Creek Baptist in Blythewood.

Treasurer Brenda Sheets reported that the CMBA’s Paycheck Protection Program loan has officially been forgiven. She reports CMBA continues to be “in good shape” financially.

In other news, CMBA Moderator J Thompson updated VLC members on the executive director search committee process to this point. Read this recent [article](https://columbiametro.org/executive-director-search-committee/) for additional information that has been announced.

VLC will reconvene September 21.