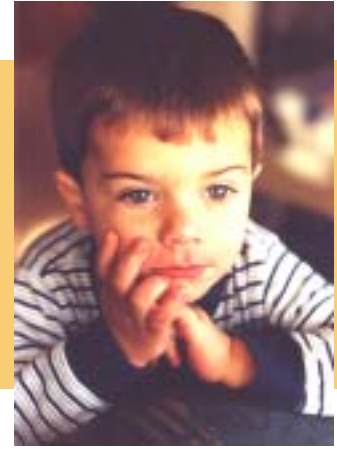


THE VINEVILLE PAGE

Helping us all grasp the big picture of where we are and what our challenges are as we face the future.



A New Beginning

Issue #1

Vineville Baptist Church is a mere toddler of four years old. Our home is much older than that. Mother Vineville was born in 1891. The house in which we worship was completed in 1924. In the summer of 1997, we dreamed of extending our witness into north Macon. We purchased property and built a great new center of worship and faith which we called Vineville North. In the summer of 2002, after costly gifts of people, leadership, talent, and money, Vineville North was established as a free-standing congregation. Both Vineville and Vineville North had great needs to be addressed. During the intervening years the challenge of rebuilding capable leadership and healthy structures have been our priorities.

At Vineville, our needs were clearly apparent. We needed: to embark upon significant repairs and improvements to our facilities; to focus on rebuilding the young married adults area and children's area; and, to focus on excellence in worship, music, missions, and outreach.

Anytime a church loses a disproportionate amount of its leadership, youth, young adults, children, and median adults so quickly, it takes years to recover. It is easy to become anxious and doubt the place that God has given us. We may look for quick fixes to our many needs. But the journey back to full strength in our numbers and ministries is a long one. We can enjoy that journey or be stressed by it.

The journey has been remarkable and *fruitful* the past four years. We have:

- Extensively renovated our buildings.
- Watched our young couples and children more than double in attendance.
- Enhanced our children's ministry both in Bible Study and Wednesday evenings.
- Watched our XYZ become one of the most effective in the Middle Georgia area.
- Stabilized our Higher Life Ministry (through grants, personnel changes, physical renovations, and partnerships).
- By late fall, we will have paid off more than \$780,000 to help Vineville North.
- Developed both a Men's Ministry and Women's Ministry
- Engaged two major emphases to draw us together: Following Christ and Building the Kingdom.
- Enjoyed the celebrated ministries of Joe Martin, Max Lyall, Carol McClure, Annie Moses, Nielson & Young, and The Raleigh Ringers.
- Been the host church for the Cherry Blossom Festival for the past two years.
- Worked on our structure and ordained a host of new deacons.

The true question is, what role does God want Vineville Baptist Church to play in his Kingdom; what does God want Vineville to be?

- Developed a website and upgraded our technology area.
- Developed print media to aid in outreach.
- Seen many new members join us (a total of 26 last year alone).
- Developed a strong Mission Team that is encouraging us to take part in mission projects (Morning Star, Habitat for Humanity, partnerships with other churches, 2007 trip to Zimbabwe).
- Enhanced our Outreach Ministry.
- Sent our youth to Europe on a music mission trip.

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It is very possible that given all the changes and challenges we have passed through, we are right on God's time table and in the center of his path for such a time as this.

It is tempting to look at the success of other congregations who have not weathered the seismic changes that we have and compare ourselves with them. What are they doing that makes them so "successful?" Comparisons regarding worship, programs, facilities, and staff, however, are fruitless and frustrating. The true question is, what role does God want Vineville Baptist Church to play in his Kingdom; what does God want Vineville to be?

Church to play in his Kingdom; what does God want Vineville to be?

We do recognize, however, that there are still areas which require ongoing attention:

- Leadership development.
- Finding a Youth/Children's Minister.
- Encouraging members to invite others to Vineville.
- Continuing property challenges.

In the days ahead, I hope to spell out to you my own sense of what God does call us to be. We are unique as a family of faith. I will strive to guide us to recognize, appreciate, and celebrate that uniqueness so that we can be on the same page as God faithfully guides us into the future he has for us.

THE VINEVILLE PAGE

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