



River Hills Community Church Vision Statement

Our History

In the spring of 1973, a small group of people organized an Easter service by the shores of Lake Wylie. Expecting a crowd of 50 to 100 worshipers, they were delighted when over 200 attended. Many denominations were represented in that first lakeside Easter congregation. From that moment, the dream of an inter-denominational church began to grow.

Two years later the young church called Gene Jester as their first pastor. In the early years of his ministry, Pastor Gene would write a treatise describing the “church dream” and setting forth the theology that had shaped and would guide this new entity called River Hills Community Church. Members adopted a covenant which is still in use today. The church was founded on the core belief that we are to be an “Inclusive church with one central affirmation: Jesus Christ is Lord of all life.”

Today River Hills Community Church spans multiple generations in its ministry to the Lake Wylie, Clover, and York County communities. Our witness has been characterized by generous support for missions, both locally and globally.

Our Dream

The mission of the River Hills Community Church is to be on co-mission with Christ to “go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” Jesus then co-missioned us to “teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you.” (Matthew 28:19-20) To be faithful to the call of God, we continue to build a caring loving, community within our congregation that reaches out to those around us.

The vision of River Hills Community Church is to **ignite and sustain growing relationships with Jesus Christ.**

We believe our core values create and define us as a congregation serving our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. We celebrate these values using the acronym GRACE:

- 1) **Give** joyously
- 2) **Reach** others in our community through Christ
- 3) **Assist** through serving with our unique gifts
- 4) **Care** for our church family
- 5) **Equip** one another for ministry

Pastor Gene Jester spoke to our central identity in his sermon of February 11th, 1979:

Today we begin a new era of our journey. God has led us all from one milepost to another, challenging us to never be rigid or closed minded. By reflecting on our past and by beginning a process of re- dreaming this church's initial dream, we will find what God expects from us as his church. This is our opportunity to re-believe what this church preaches, teaches, and inasmuch believes but to also reaffirm our own commitment to God's purpose for all of us. And in all of this, we, as a congregation pray that God will renew our faith and sense of belonging in this church.

River Hills Community Church is the gift of a loving God and a patient and working people who shared their ideas, who cared enough to devote their energies, who sacrificed their own denominational biases for Christian unity, and who dared to try an idea whose time was long overdue. And the best way to keep our church alive, vital and growing is to focus from time to time on that original dream, the desire to be a church in which all people, regardless of background, could worship God and Jesus Christ.

Every church should have a characteristic that makes it unique, and in that uniqueness should be its strength. Our dream for unity is what makes this church unique and that dream provides God's strength for us. If we ever give up on that dream, if we ever become exclusive rather than inclusive, if we ever become so self-righteous and holy that we are uncomfortable with sinners, such as we are, then we will have abandoned our dream and our strength.

Now is the time for River Hills Community Church to refocus on our original dream and our unique strength. THE DREAM CONTINUES!

Our Challenge

Over the years the church's lay leadership has guided the body through three building programs to form and shape our current campus. These facilities have enabled us to worship in a beautiful setting, provide outreach programs to our community, operate a highly regarded preschool, and serve as a resource to many community organizations.

Our buildings, entrusted to us from past lay leaders, congregational members, and current worshipers, have served us well. However, over the years, they have become worn and tired. Now they are in need of serious repair, updates, and maintenance.

Lay leaders have identified the following project areas to address these needs:

- 1) Building Updates (Install elevator in sanctuary bldg., renovate children's wing, replace playground equipment, replace kitchen equipment) **Projected cost: \$160,000**
- 2) Expanded gathering space with covered entrance (porte-cochere) **Projected cost: \$450,000**
- 3) Repairs & Maintenance (Pave parking lot, replace sanctuary building windows, repair siding/trim, replace HVAC systems, paint sanctuary complex) **Projected cost: \$520,000**
- 4) Worship & Music (Replace organ console, upgrade sound systems & equipment) **Projected cost: \$250,000**

Sub-Total: \$1,380,000

- 5) Mission Tithe (Our leaders are also recommending we invest an amount equal to 10% of the above projects in mission outreach projects.) **Projected Cost: \$138,000**

The total cost of this comprehensive list of projects is estimated at **\$1,518,000.**

Our Plan

To live faithfully our vision and core values brings us to the crossroads of a potential capital funds campaign. However, before we take that step, the Council believes it is important to seek your counsel regarding these projects and our financial capacity for funding them.

To that end, we have engaged Hewett Consulting, a national research and capital stewardship firm located in Charlotte, to conduct a confidential feasibility study this spring to assess the advisability of proceeding with these much needed improvements/repairs.

We would like you to take part in this study by completing the enclosed confidential questionnaire and returning it to their offices in Charlotte. We are eager to receive your advice, insights, and comments. Please make these projects and your responses a matter of earnest personal prayer.

Thank you for contributing your insights and information as we strive to "CONTINUE THE DREAM!"