

Nashville Campus Transition FAQ's

(January 2018)

Fellowship leadership and elders, in collaboration with the Nashville Leadership Team, have made the decision to carefully transition Fellowship Nashville from a **dependent campus, to an autonomously-led, but relationally connected congregation over the next two years.**

Why was this decision made?

From an organizational standpoint, Fellowship's Leadership believes we need clarity, simplicity, and focus for the current season and the future of our church. This decision will allow our staff leaders to focus time and energy on a narrower local context. A priority will be placed on reinvesting in the Brentwood campus, which has been declining in attendance over the past six years as it expended significant resources to launch two other campuses.

From a mission and vision standpoint, we are convinced—perhaps more than ever—that the church is called to multiply by making disciples, and this multiplication happens best when leaders have the freedom to contextualize the gospel for their specific geographic area and cultural context. (A great example of gospel contextualization is Paul's ministry in Athens in Acts 17). Transitioning Fellowship Nashville to an autonomous congregation will empower our Nashville campus leaders to better engage the unique cultural dynamics of Davidson County, and allow our Brentwood and Franklin campus leaders to do the same in Williamson County.

How was the decision made?

Fellowship's Cross-Campus Leadership Team, Nashville Leadership Team, and elders worked through a thorough and intentional process over a four-month period (September – December 2017). This process involved an **assessment** of our current reality, an **investigation** into other multi-site models and strategies, and **consultation** from two outside groups. After much prayer and careful research and discussion, a recommendation was made to the elder team on December 13, 2017.

(Primary resources used: *Multi-Church* by Brad House and Gregg Allison; personalized organizational assessment by Vanderbloemen Group, September 5-7, 2017; Three, multi-site church benchmarking interviews: Brentwood Baptist, LifePoint Church, Sojourn Church; personalized consultation by Brad House and Gregg Allison of Sojourn (November 30, 2017).

What does this mean for the Nashville campus?

At the end of the two-year transition process Fellowship Nashville:

- Will no longer be a dependent campus of Fellowship Bible Church, but will become an autonomously-led church with a close relational and collaborative connection to Fellowship Bible Church.
- Will have localized leadership (elders and staff) focusing on their mission and managing their finances.
- Will closely collaborate with Fellowship Bible Church in five key areas: Teaching series, Worship & Arts, Training/Development, Local/Global Outreach, and ministry resources.

When is this all going to happen?

Not overnight. The transition will be made over a two-year process with certain milestones and benchmarks along the way. Fellowship Nashville will be fully autonomous by January 2020.

What's going to change at the Nashville campus?

Most will not even notice the change. It will mostly be felt by our staff who will be working behind the scenes to transition the Nashville campus' finances, ministry processes, website, legal standing, and oversight during this period. The Nashville Leadership Team will work under the guidance of the Fellowship elder board to identify and install a separate elder board for Fellowship Nashville in the coming year.

What's NOT going to change at the Nashville campus?

- Our worship services and teaching on Sunday mornings
- Our values, theology, and mission statement
- Our commitment to Fellowship Kids. We are seeking to grow our kid's ministry into a student ministry as we speak.
- Our commitment to our city. If anything, it will be deepened and expanded.

Is the Nashville campus able to support itself financially?

Remarkably, the Nashville campus was essentially self-sustaining by the end of year one and has seen an increase in giving during the current fiscal year. Becoming financially independent may also allow the flexibility for cost savings in a few areas.

Was this the plan from the start?

No. It was not the original plan for Fellowship Nashville, but Fellowship elders have always been open-handed that God might one day lead one or more of our campuses into autonomous churches.

Are there any similar plans for the Franklin campus?

No. There are no plans for the Franklin campus to follow Fellowship Nashville and become an autonomous church in the foreseeable future. We believe our current approach to multi-site church can continue to work well with two campuses in a closely-shared geographic area (Brentwood and Franklin). As always, we are being open-handed to God's leadership in the future.

Are there plans to launch any additional campuses?

We have no plans to launch additional Fellowship campuses in the foreseeable future. The elder and leadership teams believe God is directing our energy and focus toward reinvesting in the Brentwood campus, continuing to grow the Franklin campus, and helping the Nashville campus transition well over the next two years. Should God lead us differently in the future, we will follow His leadership.

What are Fellowship Nashville's hopes for its future?

- **To be a church known for their love** – for each other, the downtrodden, the outcasts and for the city.
- **To focus on multiplication and discipleship** - to not settle for building a crowd, but to mobilize a movement of people growing in their relationship with Christ and with one another, maturing in their faith, multiplying themselves in others, and giving their lives away.
- **To increase engagement with the people, neighborhoods, and the city** around them. To have personal and corporate engagement in the places where they live, work, and play.