



Back in June, we laid out the vision "framework" for the future of the NorthCoast. Every picture tells a story. As I look at pictures in my past I reflect on where I was at the time and where I was going. Looking back, I can see where I have changed for better or worse.

Today I want to look at 2 pictures in the frame. The first "snapshot" is where we have been this past year and the second is the big picture of the future which has 4 parts to it: the foreground, the midground, the background and the horizon.

Before you read further, if you have not seen / read part 2, do so by clicking [here](#).

Our Current Snapshot...



FINANCIAL CONGREGATIONS

Income [2016 Projected]:	
Congregational Giving	\$53K
SCBO Assistance	\$10K
Other Income	\$5K
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Total Income	\$68K
Expenses [2016 Projected]:	
Mark's Salary / Housing -	\$30K
Mark's Travel / Reimburse -	\$10.5K
Mark's Annuity -	\$1.5K
Administrative -	\$8K
Office Costs -	\$8.5K
Ministries / Fellowship -	\$9K
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Total Expenses	\$67.5K

We have 34 congregations listed for our Association. Only 25 have financially supported the Association as of June 30, 2016.

Over the past 2 years, 7 churches have closed their doors or have ceased to continue.

80% of our congregations have declined numerically.

Out of state missions assistance has declined due to lack of communication / follow up by churches.

However, a few of our congregations have had more decisions for Christ, more baptisms and have grown this year over previous years.

5 congregations have begun partnering with Lighthouse Ministries in Lorain.

Together we assisted in international missions and a Maine vision trip.

We have 2 directions to go as an Association as we look at our current picture.

The first is to continue down the path we have been going and eventually have to make some hard decisions to cease as an Association and partner with others. This is not a bad direction, but I do not believe this is the best direction.

The second direction is to go in a direction we have never gone. Kyle Idleman speaks of taking a family vacation to the beach. The kids wanted to stay in the pool because it was fun and safe, but they had never seen the ocean. Once they stepped into the ocean, they didn't want to hang at the pool. Many of us feel safe in the pool, but God wants us to go to the ocean where He controls the waves we ride.

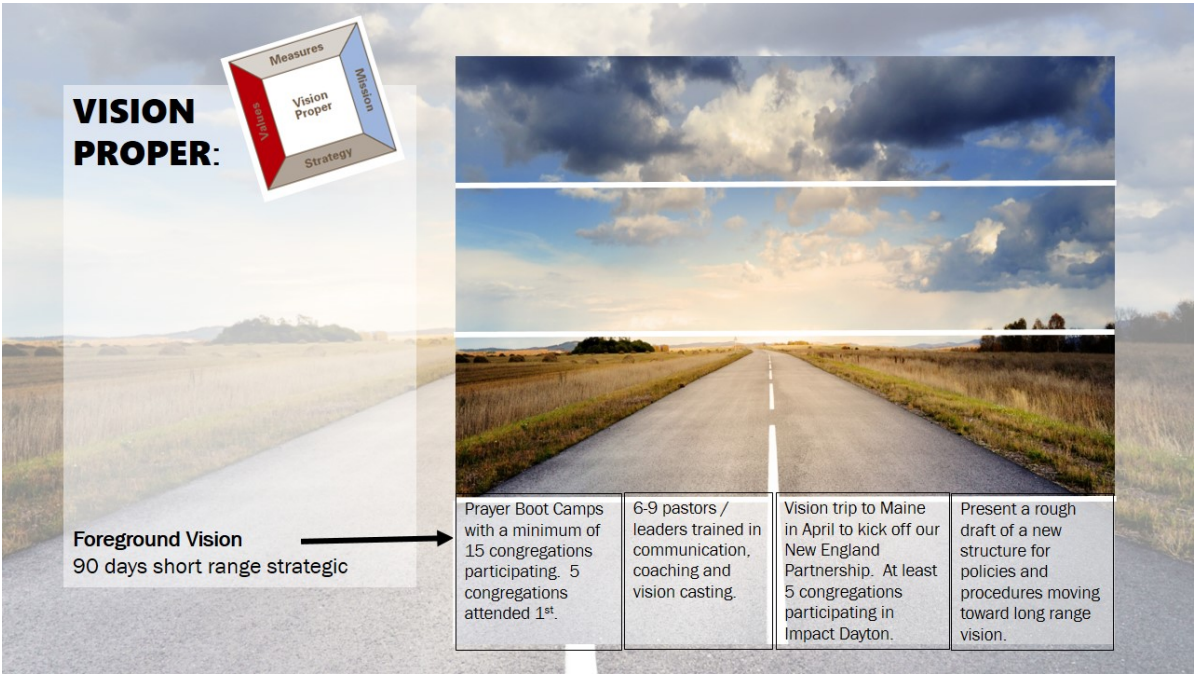
It is Time for a New Picture...



At our Annual Meeting this past year, I encouraged us to make this a "year of prayer". I truly believe that this new direction has been, will be and needs to be bathed in prayer. This is why we have offered prayer boot camps and the Battle Plan for Prayer Bible Study which more than 10 congregations have taken advantage of.

So let's look at the big picture in segments...

The Foreground...



As you click on the image to view the foreground vision, you will see some has already been accomplished and some needs to be explained.

By November, a few things are going to happen.

1. A few pastors will be going to Nashville to be trained in the Leadership Pipeline.
2. We are going to kick off our first annual Association Mission Day. This will be each year on a Saturday in October prior to the Annual Meeting in the region of the Annual Meeting. For Instance, this year we will do something in North Eaton. This will be led by our Evangelism Director, Pastor AD Goins. We will also prayer walk at each of our Executive Board locations prior to meeting and fellowship.
3. In partnership with Church Planter Catalyst Steve Long and NorthWest Church Strengtheners Matt Pardi, we will develop sending communities and supporting communities to plant healthy supported churches.
4. We are simplifying who we are and what we do as we restructure the policies and procedures for the Association. At the Annual Meeting, a simplified Association structure for budget purposes will be presented.

The Midground...



Within the next year, all churches will receive the new policies and procedures draft to be approved along with options for training and coaching to become healthier and more mission minded. This is very simplistic. Our focus will be evangelism, discipleship, missions and fellowship. We will continue with the theme of prayer, but 2017 will be the year to prepare and partner together on mission.

With that said, I encourage you to submit to the Association any needs and plan for a mission team to help out next summer. I encourage you to budget next year to take a mission trip or to send a delegate on a mission trip.

Lighthouse Ministries in Lorain will be a place where Associational Churches can partner to help the homeless and hurting in Lorain County. Think "mission center" more than church. Lighthouse Baptist Church will be a branch of Lighthouse Ministries in Lorain. We hope to have an open house once the property is completed. Can your family or your congregation provide a meal one Sunday night to feed around 75 to 100 people? If you can, contact lighthouselorain@gmail.com.

In the summer of 2017, each church will have the opportunity to send someone on mission to Maine or for the youth to partner in World Changers or with a local Association missions opportunity. We are hoping to have pocket evangelistic events with mission teams from Mississippi, Missouri and the Carolinas.

The Background...

Measures

Vision Proper

Strategy

VISION PROPER:

Background Vision

3+ years long range – strategic

6 NCBA mission trips per year to local state impact [2], national partnerships – New England [2], and international mission trips [2]	2 plants by NCBA sending congregations and multiple supporting congregations.	25+ association congregations partnering together in financial, physical, emotional and spiritual support for one another.	All congregations partnering in the cooperative program and celebrating at least 4 baptisms per year.
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I believe in a God-sized vision that we look at and say "it would take a miracle for this to happen". Well, start praying for a miracle.

I believe we have the potential to impact the world from the NorthCoast.

I believe by the year 2020, we can be taking 4-6 mission trip as an Association.

I believe each our congregations will celebrate more than 4 baptisms per year.

I believe outside congregations will want to join the NorthCoast Baptist Association and that our giving will be over \$100K per year with more than 40% going to physical mission trips locally and abroad because we are Kingdom focused and not empire driven. Currently, I am your greatest expense as an Association. My prayer is that Missions will be the greatest expense by 2020.

In a few weeks, I will send the final Part 4 of A look at the future of the NorthCoast Baptist Association. In this portion we will discuss the "horizon" of our Association's future. It is my prayer that you catch the vision and pray for the future of the NorthCoast Baptist Association. Drop me a note to let me know your thoughts so far - northcoastdom@gmail.com

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