

If someone walked by our church building and didn't know us, what might they assume we care about?  
For whom are our hearts breaking? What gifts are hiding in plain sight among us?

# Building for Hope

## A Bold Step Toward the Future

Tabernacle is one of just thirteen churches nationwide selected to participate in the pilot cohort of Building for Hope, a two-year, grant-funded initiative supporting congregations as they explore how their buildings and land can better serve their communities and help sustain their mission. In partnership with RootedGood and national leaders in church building innovation, we're part of a diverse cohort learning how congregations can listen deeply, dream boldly, and act faithfully. We're exploring new models of ministry that strengthen our relationships with our neighbors and help us faithfully steward what God has entrusted to us.

Our current leadership team includes: Ryan Corbitt, Jay Hartman, Donna Soyars, Kathy McGraw, Sterling Severns, and April Kennedy. In the weeks ahead, we hope to welcome additional members to the team—people who feel called to help guide this journey and bring their insight, experience, and heart to the work. This team is not making decisions on behalf of the church. We are simply facilitators—guiding a process that invites the entire congregation to discern, imagine, and decide together how God might be leading us forward.

Three of our team members will participate in the next offsite cohort gathering May 15–17 in Alexandria, Virginia, where we'll continue learning from other congregations and return better equipped to help guide the next phase of our journey with fresh inspiration. Upon their return, we'll launch a series of church-wide gatherings, anticipating the first to take place in the second half of May and continuing throughout the year.

### *What is Social Enterprise—and Why Does It Matter to the Church?*

Social enterprise is a mission-centered way for congregations to use their buildings, land, and gifts to respond to community needs while generating income to sustain ministry. Social enterprise may include launching or supporting a business, but only as a means of expressing and sustaining the church's mission. The goal is to let God's mission lead—ensuring any enterprise aligns with our calling to love, serve, and seek justice.

*"A faithful economic practice that puts Mission first, listens to the community, and invites the congregation to imagine how their assets can serve both people and purpose."*



## Churches across the country are:

- Turning unused classrooms into art studios and business incubators
- Offering coworking spaces and after-school programs
- Inviting food entrepreneurs to use their kitchens
- Developing affordable housing on church property
- Partnering with nonprofits and neighbors to host festivals, gardens, and shared community spaces

These are not side projects—they're creative extensions of a church's mission.

## What We've Learned So Far

- Mission comes first. The why must be rooted in God's calling.
- Listening is essential. Real impact comes from deep community relationships.
- Sustainability matters. Long-term ministry needs stable, faithful funding.
- Start small. Holy experiments often begin with pop-ups, pilot programs, or even a garden plot.
- Faith leads. The most powerful ideas come from asking, 'For whom are our hearts breaking?'

## Our Church, Our Call

This season is an invitation—not to fix a problem, but to follow God's Spirit into what's possible. With humility, imagination, and joy, we are being called to:

- Discern together how our facilities might be used more fully for the common good
- Deepen our connection to our neighbors
- Imagine ways our mission can be expressed in fresh, faithful ways
- Explore sustainable models of ministry that support our calling

**Let's keep listening. Let's dream together. Let's build for hope.**



**Want to see what this journey looks like in action?** Scan the QR code to watch a short video reflection from our first offsite gathering.