

November 2017

Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ!

I am pleased to write today about the progress of the strategic planning process, begun with the launch of our Strategic Planning Committee in March. Since then, the committee has been listening to the voices of the Duke Divinity community - meeting with faculty and staff; talking with students, alumni and our Board of Visitors; and listening to constituencies from the church and community. That work continues through the end of this year. It will result in a draft framing document, outlining the strategic themes – or “pillars” – that will guide our strategy. It will also present the broad objectives toward which we will work. In the spring, we will put in place broad working groups to identify the actions necessary to achieve these goals. The committee will present the plan for approval in November 2018.

As we move into the next phase of our work, your feedback is increasingly important. Thus we have established a webpage to keep you updated and to provide a [link](#) for your comments. We will continue to place relevant documents for your internal review in the *S:\Strategic Planning Process* folder.

As the committee continues its work, I’ve asked them to be attentive to the following lenses:

- **Culture Shifts:** The ecclesial landscape is undergoing rapid change.
- **Demographic Shifts:** The American experience includes increasing racial diversity and the aging of the White population in the United States.
- **“New” Skill Sets:** Churches must acquire and develop new sets of skills in order to fulfill their missional vocation in changing circumstances.
- **Preparing Leaders:** Duke Divinity School must work to prepare leaders for this church of the future.

I am grateful for the steadfast work of the committee and the honest conversations that our community has provided in the process. I encourage you to be in contact with members of the committee with your questions and wisdom. I ask for your continued prayers for our work and progress together.

Grace and Peace,



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Dean
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