



# Bethany Forward

## 30-Day Action Guide

Facing Reality. Reimagining Ministry. Renewing Leadership.

Reality → Renewal → Sustainability

Nehemiah 2:17–18

“You see...” → “Come...” → “Let us rebuild...”

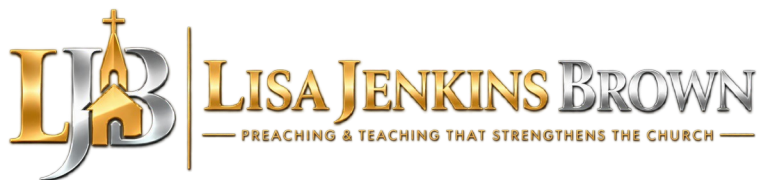
Bethany Baptist Church of Harlem

**Rev. Quinton Chad Foster, Senior Pastor**

**Dea. Stephen Robinson, Diaconate Chairperson**

**Rev. Dr. Lisa Jenkins Brown, CSP**

Instructor & Facilitator • [www.lisajenkinsbrown.com](http://www.lisajenkinsbrown.com)



**START HERE**

## Turn What You Learned Into Action

This resource builds on the Bethany Forward Leadership Summit and Participant Workbook. It does not introduce a new curriculum. It is designed to help participants reflect on, apply, and continue the work already begun.

The workbook helped Bethany learn, assess, and diagnose. This guide helps you practice small changes over 30 days. Keep your completed workbook nearby. Each reference points to an existing tool; you do not need to repeat an assessment unless new information genuinely changes your view.

Use one day at a time. Most actions should take 5–20 minutes. Some require a conversation or permission from a ministry leader. If a day does not fit your role, adapt the action within your authority or help the person who owns it. Do not promise a change on behalf of Bethany without the appropriate approval.

### The four movements

**WEEK 1 / SEE** Verify what you noticed and listen for what you missed.

**WEEK 2 / CONNECT** Make belonging more tangible through small relational actions.

**WEEK 3 / DEVELOP** Recognize gifts and support people before assigning more work.

**WEEK 4 / REBUILD** Test a bounded change with ownership and a review date.

Days 29 and 30 help you connect the four weeks to your personal commitment and the leadership team's longer agenda. Mark completed days if useful, but the goal is faithful follow through, not a perfect streak.

The guide follows Nehemiah 2:17–18: see honestly, come toward one another, and rebuild together.

**WEEK 1 / SEE**

## Verify before you decide.

Look again at what the summit surfaced, gather a little evidence, and listen without defending.

### **DAY 01 / Review one observation**

**ONE ACTION** Read your Bethany Reality Check. Choose one observation that needs confirmation; write it in your own words without treating it as a settled fact.

**ONE QUESTION** What would help us know whether this is true?

**RETURN TO THE WORKBOOK** The Bethany Reality Check

**INTENTION** God, give me honest eyes.

---

### **DAY 02 / Ask before assuming**

**ONE ACTION** Ask one member with a different length of connection to Bethany what feels life giving right now. Listen without defending or explaining.

**ONE QUESTION** What did I hear that I had not considered?

**INTENTION** Make me quick to listen.

---

### **DAY 03 / Locate one source of evidence**

**ONE ACTION** Ask the appropriate leader whether a recent attendance, participation, or ministry record can clarify the observation you chose. Respect confidentiality and use only information you are authorized to see.

**ONE QUESTION** Does the available evidence support, complicate, or leave open my observation?

**RETURN TO THE WORKBOOK** Congregational Reality Assessment

**INTENTION** Help me handle information with care.

---

### **WHAT HAPPENED / WHAT NEEDS FOLLOW UP**

---

---

WEEK 1 / SEE

## Verify before you decide.

Days 4–5 • Continue this week's movement.

### DAY 04 / Ask what a practice serves

**ONE ACTION** Return to one practice you marked under Mission, Tradition, Method, or Habit. Ask someone involved what purpose it serves today; do not argue for a change yet.

**ONE QUESTION** Whose experience of this practice differs from mine?

**RETURN TO THE WORKBOOK** Mission Tradition Method Habit

**INTENTION** Teach me to seek purpose before preference.

---

### DAY 05 / Protect a strength

**ONE ACTION** Identify one existing Bethany strength that should remain visible during renewal. Tell a person who helps sustain it why it matters.

**ONE QUESTION** How could that strength serve people more fully now?

**RETURN TO THE WORKBOOK** The Bethany Reality Check

**INTENTION** Let gratitude sharpen my sight.

---

### WHAT HAPPENED / WHAT NEEDS FOLLOW UP

---

---

---

---

WEEK 1 / SEE

# Verify before you decide.

Days 6–7 • Continue this week’s movement.

DAY 06 / Observe the welcome

**ONE ACTION** Notice one ordinary point of contact with Bethany: a phone call, message, entrance, website, or gathering. Record what a person new to the church could understand without insider help.

**ONE QUESTION** What might be unclear to someone arriving for the first time?

**INTENTION** Help me see with a guest’s eyes.

---

DAY 07 / Share a careful finding

**ONE ACTION** Offer your ministry leader a two sentence observation: what you noticed and what still needs verification. Invite correction.

**ONE QUESTION** What should we learn before acting?

**INTENTION** Make my words truthful and useful.

---

WHAT HAPPENED / WHAT NEEDS FOLLOW UP

---

---

---

---

**WEEK 2 / CONNECT**

## Make room for relationship.

Choose small points of contact that help people feel known and find a next step.

### **DAY 08 / Choose one removable barrier**

**ONE ACTION** Review the Engagement Barrier Audit you completed. Select one barrier you can influence without waiting for a major policy change.

**ONE QUESTION** Who experiences this barrier most directly?

**RETURN TO THE WORKBOOK** Engagement Barrier Audit

**INTENTION** Open a door I can reach.

---

### **DAY 09 / Learn a name and a story**

**ONE ACTION** Speak with someone you rarely encounter. Ask an open question and listen; do not turn the conversation into a request to volunteer.

**ONE QUESTION** What did this person want me to understand?

**INTENTION** Let welcome be sincere.

---

### **DAY 10 / Check the next step**

**ONE ACTION** Ask someone who recently joined an activity whether the next step was clear to them. Listen for what helped and what caused uncertainty.

**ONE QUESTION** Where was the handoff easy or difficult?

**RETURN TO THE WORKBOOK** Bethany Engagement Journey Map

**INTENTION** Show me where a connection can deepen.

---

### **WHAT HAPPENED / WHAT NEEDS FOLLOW UP**

---

---

WEEK 2 / CONNECT

## Make room for relationship.

Days 11–12 • Continue this week's movement.

### DAY 11 / Follow through on contact

**ONE ACTION** If you promised a call, answer, introduction, or prayer, complete it today. If you made no promise, reach out to someone whose absence you have noticed with care rather than pressure.

**ONE QUESTION** Did I do what I said I would do?

**INTENTION** Let my care be dependable.

---

### DAY 12 / Invite a missing perspective

**ONE ACTION** Ask a ministry leader who should be heard before a decision is made. With permission, invite that person to offer a view without asking them to represent an entire group.

**ONE QUESTION** Who else needs a place in this conversation?

**RETURN TO THE WORKBOOK** The Empty Chair

**INTENTION** Make room for another voice.

---

### WHAT HAPPENED / WHAT NEEDS FOLLOW UP

---

---

---

---

WEEK 2 / CONNECT

# Make room for relationship.

Days 13–14 • Continue this week’s movement.

DAY 13 / Clarify one message

**ONE ACTION** Read an upcoming ministry invitation as though you were new to Bethany. Suggest one small edit that states when, where, whom to contact, or what to expect.

**ONE QUESTION** What would make participation easier?

**INTENTION** Give our invitations clarity.

---

DAY 14 / Report one connection lesson

**ONE ACTION** Tell the responsible ministry leader one barrier you saw, one thing already working, and one small change worth testing. Do not present one conversation as a congregation wide verdict.

**ONE QUESTION** What could be tested in the next month?

**RETURN TO THE WORKBOOK** Engagement Barrier Audit

**INTENTION** Help me speak with humility.

---

WHAT HAPPENED / WHAT NEEDS FOLLOW UP

---

---

---

---

**WEEK 3 / DEVELOP**

## Recognize before you recruit.

Encourage gifts, clarify support, and invite participation without pressure.

### **DAY 15 / Notice an underused gift**

**ONE ACTION** Return to the Gifts, Skills, Passion, Availability Inventory or Leadership Capacity Map. Think of one person whose contribution you have observed but may not have named.

**ONE QUESTION** What gift have I actually seen them use?

**RETURN TO THE WORKBOOK** Gifts Skills Passion Availability Inventory

**INTENTION** Teach me to notice gifts.

---

### **DAY 16 / Offer specific encouragement**

**ONE ACTION** Tell that person the specific contribution you appreciate. Leave room for their own sense of calling; do not attach a job to the compliment.

**ONE QUESTION** What did I learn from their response?

**INTENTION** May my words strengthen someone.

---

### **DAY 17 / Ask about desire and capacity**

**ONE ACTION** With a person who welcomes the conversation, ask what kind of contribution or learning interests them now and what time they can realistically offer.

**ONE QUESTION** What support would matter more than a title?

**INTENTION** Help me honor their season of life.

---

### **WHAT HAPPENED / WHAT NEEDS FOLLOW UP**

---

---

WEEK 3 / DEVELOP

Recognize before you recruit.

Days 18–19 • Continue this week’s movement.

DAY 18 / Offer a low pressure glimpse

**ONE ACTION** With the ministry leader’s approval, invite an interested person to observe one task or gathering before making any commitment. Tell them what to expect.

**ONE QUESTION** Did they have space to ask questions or decline?

**RETURN TO THE WORKBOOK** Leadership Development Planner

**INTENTION** Let invitation leave room for freedom.

---

DAY 19 / Make support explicit

**ONE ACTION** For one current or possible volunteer task, ask the ministry owner who explains the role, gives feedback, and answers questions. Clarify one missing point.

**ONE QUESTION** Would a new person know where to turn?

**RETURN TO THE WORKBOOK** Volunteer Experience Audit

**INTENTION** Help us equip before we ask.

---

WHAT HAPPENED / WHAT NEEDS FOLLOW UP

---

---

---

---

---

WEEK 3 / DEVELOP

Recognize before you recruit.

Days 20–21 • Continue this week’s movement.

DAY 20 / Connect two generations

**ONE ACTION** Introduce two willing people from different generations who share an interest in a ministry or cause. Invite conversation rather than assigning a mentor relationship.

**ONE QUESTION** What might each learn from the other?

**RETURN TO THE WORKBOOK** Intergenerational Ministry Assessment

**INTENTION** Grow mutual respect among us.

---

DAY 21 / Thank without increasing the load

**ONE ACTION** Thank one person whose work is often unseen. Ask whether their current responsibility is sustainable; listen before offering a solution.

**ONE QUESTION** What support or relief did they name?

**INTENTION** Let gratitude include care.

---

WHAT HAPPENED / WHAT NEEDS FOLLOW UP

---

---

---

---

---

**WEEK 4 / REBUILD**

## Move one change into practice.

Keep the scope small, name the owner, protect capacity, and set a review date.

### **DAY 22 / Spot a concentrated burden**

**ONE ACTION** Revisit the Ministry Dependency Map. Choose one responsibility that currently rests with too few people and that your team is authorized to discuss.

**ONE QUESTION** What would happen if the current person needed to step away?

**RETURN TO THE WORKBOOK** Ministry Dependency Map

**INTENTION** Show us where the load can be shared.

---

### **DAY 23 / Propose a shareable part**

**ONE ACTION** Ask the current owner whether one bounded piece of that responsibility could be shared or taught. Do not announce a transfer before speaking with them.

**ONE QUESTION** What would the current owner need to feel supported?

**INTENTION** Help us build trust into the handoff.

---

### **DAY 24 / Find the decision maker**

**ONE ACTION** Determine who has the authority to approve a small test of your proposed change. Ask what information that person needs.

**ONE QUESTION** What decision is ours to make and what requires approval?

**INTENTION** Give us wise boundaries.

---

### **WHAT HAPPENED / WHAT NEEDS FOLLOW UP**

---

---

WEEK 4 / REBUILD

Move one change into practice.

Days 25–26 • Continue this week’s movement.

DAY 25 / Set a small test

**ONE ACTION** With the right approval, describe one action your ministry can try within 30 days. Keep its scope small enough that the team can learn from it.

**ONE QUESTION** What would we need to observe to decide whether it helped?

**RETURN TO THE WORKBOOK** Bethany 12 Month Renewal Agenda

**INTENTION** Let us begin faithfully.

---

DAY 26 / Name an owner and date

**ONE ACTION** Ask who will carry the test, who will support them, and when the team will check in. Record the agreement where the ministry normally tracks decisions.

**ONE QUESTION** Is the owner willing and equipped?

**RETURN TO THE WORKBOOK** Bethany 12 Month Renewal Agenda

**INTENTION** Make our commitments clear.

---

WHAT HAPPENED / WHAT NEEDS FOLLOW UP

---

---

---

---

WEEK 4 / REBUILD

Move one change into practice.

Days 27–28 • Continue this week’s movement.

DAY 27 / Check the human cost

**ONE ACTION** Ask whether the proposed change creates hidden work for the pastor, staff, or a dependable volunteer. Adjust the plan if it merely moves the burden.

**ONE QUESTION** Whose rest or capacity must this plan protect?

**RETURN TO THE WORKBOOK** The Church Gets a Sabbatical Too

**INTENTION** Teach us to sustain the people who serve.

---

DAY 28 / Connect to the wider agenda

**ONE ACTION** Share the test with the leadership group responsible for Bethany’s 12 month priorities. Ask whether it advances an agreed priority or needs revision.

**ONE QUESTION** What evidence will be useful at the next review?

**RETURN TO THE WORKBOOK** Bethany 12 Month Renewal Agenda

**INTENTION** Keep us aligned in purpose.

---

WHAT HAPPENED / WHAT NEEDS FOLLOW UP

---

---

---

---

---

**DAYS 29–30 / CONTINUE**

## Keep the Work Moving

The month ends by returning to the commitments and priorities Bethany already named. Use these two days to make the next step visible to the people who will carry it.

**DAY 29 / Return to your own commitment**

**ONE ACTION** Read the commitment you made at the close of the summit. Choose one action within your authority to continue for the next month; revise an unrealistic promise honestly.

**ONE QUESTION** What will I actually do, and when?

**RETURN TO THE WORKBOOK** My Bethany Forward Commitment

**INTENTION** Help my yes be honest.

---

**DAY 30 / Report, thank, and schedule**

**ONE ACTION** Tell the appropriate person what you tried, what you learned, and what remains open. Thank those who helped. Put the next review date on the calendar with the owner.

**ONE QUESTION** What will keep this from becoming a one month burst?

**RETURN TO THE WORKBOOK** Bethany 12 Month Renewal Agenda

**INTENTION** Let us rebuild together.

---

**A simple 30-day handoff**

At the next scheduled ministry meeting, share one observed change, one question that remains, and the date when the team will review its next action. Keep the record in the ministry's normal decision process. If a proposal is beyond your role, bring it to the person or body authorized to decide.

“Let us rebuild...” is a shared commitment. Let the next review show what Bethany learned, whom it involved, and how it cared for the people doing the work.