

4-1-2021

We Are Furman

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Recommended Citation

Davis, Elizabeth (2021) "We Are Furman," *Furman Magazine*: Vol. 64: Iss. 1, Article 5.
Available at: <https://scholarexchange.furman.edu/furman-magazine/vol64/iss1/5>

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Reflection exists at the core of The Furman Advantage – and, really, all that we do at Furman University. It is how we take what we’ve learned and understand and grow from it. Reflection helps us to better understand our purpose and what constitutes a meaningful life.

It is with this in mind, and following the recommendation of the “Seeking Abraham” report and direction of the Board of Trustees, that Furman reviewed and revised its Vision, Mission and Values Statements (*see previous page and furman.edu/about/mission-vision-values*) and updated our online history of the university, including an extended timeline that is more comprehensive and inclusive (*furman.edu/about/history*).

A working group chaired by former Trustee Baxter Wynn and including students, faculty, staff, alumni and trustees drafted the new statements, which focus on who we are, where we want to go, and what defines us as a university and a community. The Board of Trustees approved the revised statements this past fall, and we introduced them this spring, as we begin a new year recommitting ourselves to our values as an institution.

This spring we also celebrated **Joseph Vaughn ’68**, Furman’s first Black undergraduate student, first on what is now the annual Joseph Vaughn Day, on Jan. 29, and then on April 16, when we dedicated a statue in his honor



WE ARE FURMAN



*Our vision, mission and values
reflect who we are.*

BY ELIZABETH DAVIS

– placed on a plaza bearing his name in front of the Duke Library. (*See furman.edu/joseph-vaughn and our next issue for more coverage.*)

We see Joe Vaughn and all he stood for in our new vision, mission and values. He inspires us to commit ourselves to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Ed Good ’67, chair of the Board of Trustees, said, “While the Board of Trustees is tasked with ‘acting upon matters of strategic

importance ... and successful achievement of its mission and goals,’ it is the faculty, staff and students who make our vision, mission and values come alive. The elements of The Furman Advantage are deeply rooted within these statements and, while the language has been updated, our commitment to leading lives of meaning and consequence remains the same.”

We look to the horizon through our vision:

“Inspiring purposeful living and fostering thriving communities through learning, creativity, and innovation.” We do this by continuing our commitment to outstanding undergraduate education and by broadening our academic footprint to benefit our students and the community, through our institutes, select advanced degree programs, and new learning and service opportunities. (*For one example, see “The Next Idea Hub,” about a Furman Innovation and Entrepreneurship partnership in downtown Greenville, on page 6.*)

Finally, I want to draw your attention to our new Values Statement, and how it inspires and shapes our vision and mission, “calling on us to meet the challenges and responsibilities of a complex, diverse, and rapidly changing world with courage, moderation, justice, wisdom, and humility.”

Now more than ever, we need to ensure that how we treat each other and care for our communities is informed by our values.

As Furman prepares for its third century, I am grateful to all of the members of our community who helped us to refocus our vision, mission and values and to all who help us live and realize them. Please join me in recommitting ourselves to this noble endeavor. ✦

Elizabeth Davis