

Transcript

Nate & Amanda Evans Interview

Episode 27: “Communicating’ with Baptist Homes & Healthcare Ministries”

Andy Braams: Well, today on *Biblical Perspectives on Aging*, we have two individuals joining us...a couple...Nathan and Amanda Evans. And what’s unique about this is that the Evans are a part of the communications team here at Baptist Homes & Healthcare Ministries and they are actually the ones that help get this podcast up where you can watch it. If you watch it on YouTube or listen to it on whatever podcaster or podcatcher that you might listen to it or on the website, whatever. So, I’m glad to have Nathan and Amanda with us. And whichever one would like to jump into this first, could you just tell the audience a little bit about yourselves and about your actual company since you have your own company that we contract with at this point?

Nathan Evans: Yeah. Actually, The Baptist Home was our very first client back in 2007, I think. [00:01:20] And we felt God calling us to step out and do something on our own. And we had a really great marketing thing lined up and our friends that we had made from Baptist life at The Baptist Home needed some help.

And we thought, “Sure, we can help them. We can do a little flyer or something.” And so we just thought, “Hey, it’d be fun to get to contribute.” And about, oh, a week into just light conversations, at some point it occurred to us this is a much bigger organization than we ever realized, and there’s a lot more good work to be done.

In fact, I think we were meeting with the president at that point and he said something to that effect, “I want you to go back research The Baptist Home and then come back to me with a better plan, a bigger plan anyway.” And so we did. We took our time and put together a [00:02:20] research plan first and spent a few months, I think, getting to know The Baptist Home, really adding depth to, you know...everybody likes the general idea of caring for your elders.

But as we went through that process and got to know The Baptist Home, that was the beginning of us truly just following [and] growing in our passion for what’s going on in the mission of Baptist Homes. And we have been serving in a kind of background support role ever since back in 2007. And it’s only been in the last six months or so that we have had the privilege of taking a much deeper step in, and taking true leadership of, communications at Baptist Homes.

Amanda Evans: Mostly, I mean, we were contracted. We met with Dr. Harrison and he expressed to us that the current communications director that we had worked with [for] years, she was stepping down to actually pursue a degree in nursing. [00:03:20] And so he talked [that] week [and] it was kind of actually our first time truly meeting him due to COVID.

And so, we really discovered how aligned our visions were. And we were super excited about his leadership [and] the direction that he was wanting to take Baptist Homes. And then he was talking to us about potentially expanding our role and after several

conversations, we ended up really stepping in. Our firm is the acting communications director so we pretty much take care of all of the communication and marketing of Baptist Homes, which has just been really fun and exciting in this extremely dynamic time of change for Baptist Homes.

Andy Braams: Yes. I know that you both are visionary and Nathan, even Amanda has said you are really the visionary. She's more nuts and bolts, [00:04:20] oftentimes, but I know both of you have expressed an excitement about the direction of Baptist Homes.

As we think about a ceiling, there seems to be no ceiling above our heads, in some ways. And so, I know you're both excited about that and [we are] glad to have you to be a part of that.

So, you shared a little bit about the history and going back to 2007 in some ways and a little bit of how things have changed, but what are some of the specific things?

What does it mean to be the Acting Communication Directors for Baptist Homes & Healthcare Ministries?

Amanda Evans: I'll probably potentially dive pretty deep since I tend to hit the details a little bit more, but at least the way that we are seeing it and then thinking about the details, the way that I see it we are truly the stewards of the message [00:05:20] [and] also kind of the stewards of the brand, which you don't typically talk about ministries and their brand together, but the vision, Who We Are, What We Are, What We Are Trying to Accomplish, as a ministry, [with] Dr. Harrison and the leadership team wanting to take Baptist Homes now and in the future, we are the ones that help curate the message to help others understand who and what we are internally and externally. We see communication and marketing not just for the external audience; it is also the internal audience and that internal audience is actually growing quite a bit too. So spending a lot of time just helping understand [what] we need to understand the vision. We need to understand what we're doing, what we're trying to accomplish, and then work to build a communication strategy of how that gets communicated out.

And then, also, a marketing strategy, which those two are kind of separate. [00:06:20] Communication is much more reactive, just talking about what's going on. Marketing is much more of the proactive side of communicating and in developing a strategy of how to get that good news about Baptist Homes out there which on our end, there really hasn't been a huge strategic plan of, "We are going to use these methods and go out this way." We've used a lot of methods in the past, but nothing with a real purposeful plan. And I'm excited about that. I'm a planner. I take Nathan's vision [and] I put implementation and plans to it. Our team then gets kind of told what to do by me on [how] to implement that.

Our four-year-old daughter often asked me, "Mommy, what do you do at work all day?" And I'm just like, "Well, I tell people what to do all day, sweetie." And, I mean, in four-year-old terms, that's what mom does, to [which] she accepted [it] without any question. And she's like, "Yes, mom [00:07:20] tells people what to do. That's what she does at home. She does it at work." It makes sense. And that, in essence, is what we're doing. We're guiding

our team in how to get that message out there, in telling people about who Baptist Homes is and building a strategy to where it isn't accidental. If you find out about Baptist Homes, we want you to find out about Baptist Homes.

So, we're going to be purposely trying to make that happen.

Nathan Evans: I'm going to list a couple of the functional pieces that we put in.

Amanda Evans: Yeah. So The Baptist Home magazine used to be referred to as the newsletter. Now the magazine [has] kind of taken on a different format, which is much more. Our quarterly magazine talks about a lot about the plans and the vision of leadership and about what's happening.

We also have a monthly digital newsletter. That is just a simple email that goes out, talking about things that have happened that month. [On] social media we've been really [00:08:20] working on expanding the Facebook presence. All the campuses now have their own presence because we're really wanting them to be part of their community, not just in it, but really engaging in part of it and known in their communities, as well as our corporate Facebook and looking at other, other social media avenues. And then we're working on just expanding our mailings and communication that way, just so people know there's so much changing, so much dynamic change happening with expanding our campuses, our campuses that have been in existence, expanding and adding, adding more services, and then new campuses, new services like hospice coming in and focusing on home health care.

And then there's the whole advocacy and education side of it and finding ways to engage with churches to get that communication out there to really build relationships with pastors and churches, knowing that we're a [00:09:20] resource for them, that aging is hard dealing with.

Aging issues are really hard. And there's just really hard dilemmas and questions and situations that pastors find themselves in a counseling situation where they may not have dealt with the situation before. And we want to be that resource and we want pastors and churches to know that we're there for them.

So, there's just a lot of publications, flyers, pamphlets, rack cards, various different formats that we're looking at utilizing, just to get that information in their hands. Because a lot of times you can say something, if you don't need the information at the time you hear it, it's gone. But if you have something in your hand that you may come across later, hopefully when the Holy Spirit can use that to guide you back to it at a later date where it's like, "Oh, I didn't need this when I got this, but six months later, I'm dealing with the situation," and here you go.

Nathan Evans: [00:10:20] So we wish we could help folks take a proactive approach to engaging with the aging process and maybe we'll find, hopefully we'll find, better ways to encourage that kind of stuff in the future. But for the most part, a lot of what drives us, I think, is just recognizing that folks are gonna come to Baptist Homes in moments of crisis.

And so, we want to be responsive to that. And I just try to make everything available at once, but try to put what is truly needed front and center so that we can be their friend in that moment of crisis,

Andy Braams: Really, as you've described your process and what you're attempting to do; and of course this would be true for anybody in a communications environment, but again, with the dynamic aspects of things going on here, you're gathering everything into a funnel.

[00:11:20] And you've got to make sure that what comes out on the other end of the funnel is proper, but is well enough presented and [that it has] said everything else to capture everything. And so, that you know, as you report to a different vice president and Rodney and other vice presidents, you getting all of this feedback and communication from the administrators and doing all these things to try to piece it together, that that cannot be an easy position.

And I'm sure it creates a few stressful and maybe even sleepless nights along the way that you have. So anyway, on my behalf and my interaction with you, I appreciate that very much because that's not my strong point at all.

So now having you both here on the screen together is a good thing. I have worked in partnership with my wife for years in an actual organized partnership, business partnership. [00:12:20] And so, how do you two work together as a team? There are obviously strengths and weaknesses that each of you will bring to your team and things that you will need to fill in with others who are a part of the organization as well.

But how do you do some things? How do you work together? How do you decide kind of who does what you've already mentioned? Amanda, you were mentioning that Nathan is kind of more of the visionary and you kind of help to carry that out, implement things, but how does that fit together?

How do the Evans work together during the day? Does that carry over into the evening? Help our audience to better understand the Evans structure on that.

Nathan Evans: I think it really helps that our friendship was built on a class project at SBU at the end of which she had had enough of me and [she] was, I think literally ready to punch me a couple of times. So we did kind of [00:13:20] have like a relationship-defining project that we worked through over the course of a semester, and that helped lay the groundwork as you know, that early time in a relationship, will do that. And then after that we had such a strong friendship. And I think that, not that you're looking for this, [this] isn't a marital podcast, but that strong friendship was a lot of fun. I think it helped us to really just establish some unspoken patterns.

I'm thinking of all the ways I wish...as you're asking that question...all the ways, I wish that we would go ahead and define some things. So maybe we could like justify that or maybe share it or whatever. But we have very naturally over 20 years of friendship now, kind of fallen into our little zones as you say, with our strengths and weaknesses. It drives me crazy when I say this, so why not say it in a public setting? [00:14:20] but I like to, I, you know, I

come in with big ideas and a lot of times, if they're good enough, if they pass the Mandy test, she just makes them happen. And there's a lot more, obviously, that goes into it and I'm filling in different ways too. I do my work, but a lot of the time, some of the most tangible stuff that comes out from our office and from our team is Mandy putting in good solid work.

Amanda Evans: So, I mean that's the privilege of the detailed person in you. The implementation side is you get to be the one that sees it, sees an idea happen. But I would say, I've worked with people with big picture ideas, and there are a lot of them I would never want to work with ever again. [00:15:20]

If you've worked with me, I'm not talking about you, I'm just throwing that out there. But there's big picture. And then there's big picture with that like desire to do the hard work, to see your idea, your vision, happen. And that, I would say, is a huge difference in Nathan's big pictures.

Yeah, he has the big picture of me. He can think of an idea as big as the universe, but he's also willing to let that go into the fire and then get pounded by the blacksmith. I don't know, bad analogy. But anyway, he's willing to let it be put under fire and let it go through the process it needs to go through to become something.

And I think that's one way that we really work together well is he can give me a big idea. [00:16:20] He can take the feedback and we can do just a lot of back and forth. And I mean, our team has sometimes heard the back and forth and it's like, "Wow. He just threw an idea out there and she's immediately saying, 'Yeah, but here's holes in it.'"

And instead of him feeling offended because the beauty of the marriage in this is there's a lot of trust. We work through this and have purposely really worked through that trust in. He knows that I respect the idea. That's why we're working on it. If I didn't respect the idea, I would say, "Nah," and we would just go on. But I really do respect the idea.

And I respect him and know that there's this like give and take. And it allows us to really refine an idea to where that creative thinking that he does can then just keep working on it, to come up with an idea that is generally speaking outside of the box. We've worked with a lot of ministries, ministries [that] don't have money, [00:17:20] and because they don't have money, they can't fund a lot of things in traditional ways that you would expect to do. And so that's the fun of getting to work on it. "Well, we have a budget of \$50 when most people are dealing with 5,000. So we got to do this thing on \$50. What's a creative way to make that happen?" And we can just sit there and go back and forth until we find a way that I can see, "Okay, I can see how this develops into a plan."

And then we've got a great team that once they are given a plan, they can just make it happen. Once they have those to-do items, they can really make it happen. And so, I think it is the years of kind of butting heads and ways that only a married couple can. But then, also, because we're married, I'm not just going to go home and gripe about what happened at work to my husband.

I have to figure this out. I have to say, “Hey. I’m really frustrated [00:18:20] with the way that you just bulldozed through that conversation and didn’t hear the feedback from your team.” And he can then say to me, “Well, I’m really frustrated and the way that you just act like my idea was stupid.” And so we can kinda, we have to work through it.

And I think that’s, I mean, it’s the beauty of a marriage to where God’s taking two totally different ways of thinking two totally different types of people and putting them together and saying, instead of fighting against each other, try to celebrate the differences and see the beauty in this because you are one.

And I think, I mean, of course we’re partial because it’s us. But I think because of that, Baptist Homes gets a better end result out of our team because we’re balancing.

You could never hope for a single person to be so well-rounded.

And because we’re coming from two, I mean, we literally come from two ends of the spectrum when we’re looking at something.

[00:19:20] And we know that if there’s a good idea in there, we’re going to find it and we’re going to battle it out in the ways that we do. And sometimes we have to separate and take a minute and then we’ll come back. But, I mean, we know that that’s the process and it’s taken a while for me some in some ways, not to just be like, “Why can’t you just see it my way and be angry about some of those things and realize, ‘Oh, this is beautiful.’”

Like, this is, this has God’s beauty in his, I mean, God created an imperfect world. And because of those imperfections, a lot of times it’s more beautiful because it still works. And marriage is ridiculously imperfect and it is a beautiful union. And I think it’s yeah, there are days where we have to work a little harder to make that imperfection work.

I would say some of our biggest struggles are we love the work that we do. [00:20:20] This is our play and we’ve had children a little later in life and a little later in marriage and that in itself has been beautiful because it’s forcing us to stop always just working.

Cause we would work every waking minute if we didn’t have other things. And we’ve done that and our children do not like it when we do that. And we stopped doing that and that’s beautiful too, because in those time constraints, we have actually found better ways to accomplish goals that I used to think, “Oh, I’ll just work harder, work longer.” And really, sometimes constraints are very necessary a lot of times to get that creative side of problem solving.

Nathan Evans: Yeah. Two cheesy thoughts to follow that up [that] you kind of touched on, but I was just sitting here listening to you talk and thinking, “It’s just like with fresh eyes, how incredible that we get to work together and how incredible. [00:21:20] I know it sounds cheesy, but how incredible that we get to work on this mission. We have been blessed with opportunities to serve ministries on a mission pretty much our entire professional life. And like we’ve done other work. That’s good too. It doesn’t have to be...it could be secular work

and still be great work. But I don't know how many times it just like hits in a new, fresh way how great it is to get to do this work.

Andy Braams: So, based upon what you all just mentioned, you know, you have done several projects along the way, some of which have created excitement, more of which will create excitement within the Baptist Homes system for you, but maybe share an example or two of a couple [projects] that have excited you, or that you're currently within or thinking about beginning.

[00:22:20] And if it's something you've already maybe done, maybe go back to that previous question, maybe take us behind the scenes. And how did you all interact with one another to bring that excitement to the project and bring that to fruition?

Amanda Evans: There's a lot of ways. I'm probably thinking of a lot of examples of how that's happened in, I mean, honestly happens on a daily basis in little ways, but in a bigger way. And most recently, just the process of yeah, even, even as I'm talking, I'm thinking of multiple conversations just this week that, that fit in there.

And I mean, that's the fun of the work we're doing. [It] is so dynamic. We find ourselves, some would say, butting heads, but that's our process where we're not butting heads in the angry way. We're just like, [00:23:20] I need him to be him. I need me to be me. That's going to clash. But in that, if we lean into us being each other, it comes out with a beautiful product.

Or, at least, we view it as a beautiful product. We'll see. The marketing plan that we've just been spending months kind of, you know, we're kind of new to a lot of this in some ways where we're just starting from scratch in so many different ways. So, we've been working on different areas of communication.

And so, then we finally got to the place where we can now put together a marketing plan and put together a strategy that we can start implementing and moving forward and digging into. And it's a vision plan. Of course, we're gonna come from so many different angles. I usually spend most of that brainstorming time honestly taking deep breaths and calming myself down [00:24:20] because Nathan is way out here and I'm sitting there going, "How in the world are we supposed to do any of that in the next 10 years, let alone the next year? Like, what are you like...you're going to just drive me into the ground with this whole idea?"

And it of course makes me kind of probably come out of the gate going, "What are you thinking? That's way too much." But I need to know where he's at. So then I can start saying, "That's great. I'm going to put that in [the] five- to ten-year goal range." And to which he kind of comes back and it's like, "Okay, I can see that maybe this is a little too big."

And it's like, "All right, let's start putting pressure on each other to get it down into an actionable plan." But then the other side of that is, you know, I'll say, "Okay, I think we can do this year." And then whenever I go to put the details to it and start working with our team on how to execute it, my detail side of it, and my [00:25:20] ability to take a small

project and make it this elaborate plan that is almost impossible to execute because I've just gone too far.

I've gone too far and putting detail to it. I've gone too far. And so, I'll go back to him and say, "Okay, this is what we're thinking." And then he looks at me and goes, "Wow, you have over-engineered this thing like crazy." He's like, "Is it necessary?" To which I have to then trust, "Okay. He's not questioning my abilities and my ability to put this together, he's protecting me and the team and making sure that we don't overwork ourselves. We don't over-commit. We don't over-engineer it to a place where we're just, we're not being practical anymore. And we're keeping that perspective of this is the goal, not these 15 things."

This is the goal. "Are you doing what is accomplishing the goal or are you just doing some busy work here?" And so I think, [00:26:20] "Yeah." There can be those tense moments because it's just like, "Well, this is my baby. This is my plan. Don't you come after my baby." And he's not attacking me personally. He's actually trying to protect me and I have to trust that and he knows I'm not attacking him saying he's being ridiculous.

I don't know what your self-talk is on that. But I think he's a genius. Of course, I'm not attacking him. I picked him, I married him. This is my guy for life. Like, I'm not like I'm not after you. And so, we just have to, we have to trust that and in that. Usually, we come out with something like our marketing plan.

We come out [with] something that is accomplishing a lot, but we're not killing ourselves in the process. And we're hopefully meeting the goals and expectations of the team. Yes, we've got this big strategy now. Now we're putting dollars and numbers to it and finding a feasible way to make this plan happen to where [00:27:20] it's helpful and beneficial.

And I mean, that's just the process. Like there's a brainstorm time where it goes far afield. I have to trust that that when it's time to bring it in, we'll have that conversation, but I need that far field time because I don't know. I get stuck. I don't go as creative as Nathan can, so I need him to go creative so we can find those things that maybe are way out here and bring it in and we can work with it.

And then there's other smaller things and there's a lot of times where, I mean...that's just the process that we've always worked on, which sometimes makes us a little slower. If we were one person doing the job and you, Andy, were to send me an email and say, "I need you to do this thing," ...cause that's how you talk, "Do this. I need this from you," or "This is what we're thinking about." [00:28:20] A lot of times my knee-jerk reaction would be one thing, but then I stop and I say, you know, there might be bigger ramifications to this. I'm going to talk to Nathan because a lot of times he can see something I don't see or vice versa where I'm like, "Hey, well, you forgot about this over here."

And so, we may take a little longer in our response, but there's a lot of times that that delay of time is because we are utilizing each other's strengths in thinking about something and it isn't abnormal for whatever we've heard to then have gone through a process where we're

like, “Hey, and if we do that, that impacts this campus over here as well, because we forgot about this thing.”

And so, actually, “You know, what if we do this with all of the campuses, all of our campuses will benefit from this one thing and it’ll roll out this way and it’ll kind of be different.” So, there’s that. I don’t know if you have any...

Nathan Evans: Well, I was wondering, [00:29:20] can you think of an example of a thing that felt like an element to the marketing strategy that we’re fleshing out and finishing up that you thought was going to be a five-year sort of thing, but as you, the great puzzler started putting together, you realize, “Oh no, we can do that now.”

Amanda Evans: And this is probably why it’s hard. So much of what we work on, goes through such a refining process that no longer is it your idea or my idea that it’s like, I know that there are things, that, in working through it, you’re like, “Well, what if we take this element of something that we didn’t think we were going to get to do,” and then you throw it in there and just like, “Oh, I didn’t even see how we could kind of hop on that already.”

And it’s...I can’t think of a specific...I hate it when you’re like, now bring up a [00:30:20] specific example.

I don’t know.

Andy Braams: Nathan, did you want to add anything to what she had said, though, earlier?

Nathan Evans: No I do, but I don’t have anything, I think, of value. She said it all.

Andy Braams: Okay. So, a new question that we’re asking in 2022 is about a favorite some sort of favorite media thing, whether that is a book, whether that is a movie, a TV show...Nathan we’ll let Amanda, since she just kind of shared a little bit, we’re going to let her take a moment to think through an answer and put you on the spot first.

What is a favorite book? TV movie, whatever?

Nathan Evans: Well, I’m so happy to be first because it means that she can’t take mine. We do really like narrative. And there are so many and we do have similar tastes. And so we do, [00:31:20] consume a lot of books or television. We do consume narrative a lot like that together.

And as I was thinking about how I might answer this question, of course, there are so many, options to choose from. And it turns out Mandy and I landed on the same. So Mandy, I’ll give you time to think of another option, an alternate, but the book that really came to mind, it kind of even surprised me as I was forced to think through it, but the book that came to mind was C.S. Lewis’ *The Great Divorce* that surprisingly has...I mean, it’s a great story.

And you know, maybe there are some theologians who want to beat me up after this. And honestly, I would welcome the input because I'd love to...as I've noticed just how much that story is shaping the way I view things, I really do need to go back and seek out some refining [00:32:20] input on what he's saying there; what he's not.

I should probably read the book again. It's been a few years now. But yeah, that book is just stuck with me and it's shaping the way I perceive, yeah, aging. You're absolutely right. Let's tie it back in.

But yeah, the aging process, what it looks like to work out your salvation with fear and trembling all of that. And so, yeah, *The Great Divorce*. It was a great...it was an easy read...a really great read. And again, I just keep noticing the way it's influencing me over time.

Andy Braams: Amanda, have you had time to think since he took, he stole your thunder on that one?

Amanda Evans: Yeah. I do like *The Great Divorce* as well. And I was actually thinking of [00:33:20] *The Space Trilogy* by C.S. Lewis. I really enjoyed just the concepts of creation, but then I went all over the place on this one. I really enjoy the story of *The Lord of the Rings*, just with the journey and, I mean, it's a good story.

I think a lot of people will agree with me on that. So there's that, but I'm probably going to end up on more of an author because he has shaped a lot of the way I think about character in being a person or a man, which I am not a man, but in humanity man-form...a lot about dignity...and that would be Louis L'Amour, who is a Western writer. And my dad read a lot of his books and that [00:34:20] was actually like the first I wanted to start reading other than books about bears and frogs when I was a kid.

And so, I would secretly read my dad's westerns on his end table until I got caught because I couldn't, I didn't always get the bookmark back in the right spot. And so he just let me start reading the books. But they are just good stories. This guy was a prolific writer, so there's a lot of them there isn't necessarily...I do have probably more that I prefer over others, but I read them every night before I go to bed because there's nothing in my life that resembles a Western.

I don't carry a gun on my hip. I don't ride a horse or any of that kind of stuff on a daily basis. So it really helps me kind of escape, but it's also...every character, every main character has a lot of dignity. They are people of their word.

[00:35:20] They help out the little guy, all that good stuff. And so, I mean, I've [had] a steady diet of that for over 30 years, you kinda realize at some point that you think a lot like a cowboy. If you read a lot about cowboys, so that's...

Nathan Evans: So, Andy, don't call her a liar.

Amanda Evans: Yeah. That is one of those trigger points for me.

Nathan Evans: It's a real thing.

Amanda Evans: Yeah. Yeah. I didn't realize that until I was accused of lying and cheating at one point in my life and Nathan was just like, "She's going to come across this table at you." So that's, that's probably not a good thing to do, but so yeah, it's a fun thing.

I mentioned that I think the first time I met Dr. Harrison he said something and I said that I really enjoyed reading. I don't know if he hasn't maybe [00:36:20] asked the same question. And I said, I really enjoyed reading, Louis L'Amour. And he got so excited and I found out that he also likes Louis L'Amour. So I'm like, all right, well, that's a fun...

Nathan Evans: It's probably what earned us this opportunity.

Amanda Evans: Yeah.

Andy Braams: You owe everything of your work at Baptist Homes to westerns written by Louis L' Amour. It's gotta be something, right?

Amanda Evans: Yeah. It's not quite the biblical answer of C.S. Lewis, or the scholarly level, but it also...he does write stories for the masses and at the reading level of where most communications should be coming.

So it does help a lot of times to remember if I want people to understand what I'm saying, I need to write at this reading level, not at the reading level that I've learned at that movement. [00:37:20] So lot of action and exciting things, and people will read what you write, if you're...

Andy Braams: And as communication and as marketing, getting people's attention and keeping it to two aspects to that.

So, well with that, as we close there are a lot of initiatives that Baptist Homes has currently [and] that we will have in coming months. Again, we are not the only client that you have, but we are a key client, but share, if you will, with the audience, any prayer requests that you all might have as individuals for your work with Baptist Homes [and] for your work in general. Just share a few thoughts that you might wish for our audience to pray with you and for you about in these coming months.

Nathan Evans: So, today we had a board meeting with Baptist Homes trustees and our prayer request with them [00:38:20] was pray for our team that we would have wisdom as we select our next projects. The reasoning there is because there, as you kind of laid out, [is] just so much opportunity and so much good work to do.

We just can't do everything we want to do, immediately. And so, we're having to meter it out and we're having to make wise restrained decisions to be strategic about it. And so, on the serve, on our specific service in the Baptist Homes, I would ask for [prayer] for wisdom and favor and patience from those that we're working with too, that, honestly, it's so fun to work with such a group of proactive, proactive, and focused people.

I'm sure they're all in the same boat as we are, but obviously we're not going to get to do everything. And so, wisdom as we do that. And then personally, for us as Blue Duck, kind of wisdom on a [00:39:20] different level, one of the things that we're so excited about in what we believe we bring to a relationship is that kind of diversity of viewpoints and skills.

And so in service to that and as we look forward and hope to grow our business and the strength of our service to our clients, we want to be really strategic about who we're partnering with and how; and we have a lot of really exciting...we have a number of really high quality, exciting partners that we work with to bring better quality stuff.

A couple of really great designers who we use for different things are a great example. In creating a new visual the visual guide, what am I looking for? The branding guy, we ran that through both of our designers to see how they would approach it differently and came back with round two. [00:40:20]

And so, it's exciting to see different partners bringing different value. But, at some point, we will need to make our own investments in-house to make sure that we're generating within Blue Duck what we want for our clients. And so that is a really clunky way of saying we want to grow smart.

We love what we get to do with Baptist Homes and we just want to do more of it. This is a lot of fun. And so, we really want God's wisdom to make the right team decisions so that we can continue that without putting our relationship with any one client at risk. Yeah. You have anything to add to that?

Amanda Evans: Not really. I mean, the wisdom aspect, just cause, I mean, we are constant...I'm constantly reminding myself just because I know where I want to be in five years, [00:41:20] that's not where I am today. So don't try to be there prematurely, like work, take the necessary steps, do the necessary work to build that foundation and get there at the time where you should be.

But then, don't also beat yourself up for not being where you can be in five years. And you're not there today because the reality is we are just starting to really do this for Baptist Homes on a big scale and I know where I want us to be in five years. We're not there. It can get frustrating on our end because we want to see those things happen and it can get frustrating for those that we're working with, where it's like, "Well, why aren't you doing this and this and this and this and this?"

And it's like, "Well, because we have to do this first." Like we're working on redoing the website to where it actually reflects the new campuses that we've added and it reflects hospice and our current website [00:42:20] design can't take on those those changes without it getting even clunkier and it just...that takes time.

And so, yeah, just that understanding and patience that things take time where, and I mean, that's what we've dealt with through 20 years we've been in communication and marketing,

a website looks like, “Oh, well you just make it happen.” It’s like, “Well, there’s code. And there’s all of this stuff that goes behind it.”

And he has to take the time to be concise because nobody really reads a website anymore. They just go to it to get specific information. You gotta make sure you got the right stuff there. And so there’s just like, there’s so much behind it and just understanding that we are hearing them and we are taking those suggestions in, but there’s just so much we can do.

[00:43:20] And so just, I guess, that just patience and understanding that we’re getting there.

Andy Braams: Okay. Well, if you don’t mind, before we close, let me just pray for you and about these items with you at this moment.

Father, I thank you for this time of allowing the Evans to share a little bit about themselves and their interaction with Baptist Homes and their part in leading us forward, helping us to present ourselves well. God, we want to be authentic. We want to be honest in who we are as an organization to care for the aging, but God, that needs to also be done right. And it needs to be done well, even as we try to do so with integrity. So, I thank you for their partnership and their participation in this ministry.

I pray that as they have asked, as they look to grow their team, as they [00:44:20] look to grow their organization, as they look to grow their possibilities with Baptist Homes and potentially elsewhere, that you do allow them to grow smart, as Nathan said, that they would be able to find the right team members [and] that that would happen in the right time.

As Amanda said that the approach that they take will set a foundation and will strengthen a foundation that they have already built so that they might grow into the future. And having the patience where they need patience, but having the persistence to stick with it and to move forward quickly, where that is necessary as well.

God, that you would allow them to continue to find strategic partnerships to help them to fulfill the mission that they have, which helps organizations like Baptist Homes to fulfill our mission, help them in their communication and their marketing to keep us on track of [00:45:20] fulfilling the mission that we have set before us and help us to communicate clearly so that they can help us to do that.

And God, again, as Amanda just said, that all of this happens in your time, in the right time, and in the right way, that they do move forward continuously, but God that they don’t try to get wherever they need to get too soon. That that is not a premature way that there is that difference between the ideal and the reality, and, God, we should move that needle towards the ideal more and more each and every day, but sometimes that just takes time and it takes that level of patience for other things to be moved out of the way. So, God, move whatever needs to be moved out of the way for them, give them clarity of mind, clarity of thought; let them be a good team together as we have heard that they try to work together now to do that; let them be good parents even as they lead this business;

[00:46:20] and a good couple as well, that will model for others of what you're doing in their life.

We thank you for this time again. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Well, Nathan, Amanda, I do appreciate you coming on and being on this side of the podcast and before whoever is listening to my voice or watching me speak at this moment, before you see this, they will add their piece to it and make sure that everything is ready.

And I'm sure at some point in time, both Nathan and Amanda, we will probably have you back on to hear more about some things going. If somebody wants to get in touch with Blue Duck Marketing, potentially for some assistance, but also if they would like to subscribe, let's say to the *My Home* magazine or get the digital newsletter or something, what, how would they best do that?

Could you just share a little bit about that before we sign off today? [00:47:20]

Amanda Evans: If you want to get a hold of us for any reason, Blue Duck or otherwise, just, I mean, [the] Baptist Homes e-mail that we answer, which is communications@thebaptisthome.org. So it's communication (it's plural) with [an] S.

Nathan Evans: Nathan or amanda@blueduckmarketing.com. So nathan@blueduckmarketing.com. amanda@blueduckmarketing.com. Where's the page for the...

Amanda Evans: If you want to subscribe it's on our Contact Us page. It's not the easiest to get to, as of this date, to subscribe to our magazine, but we will be fixing that when we redo the website, but we'll make the link...

Nathan Evans: We'll put a link.

Amanda Evans: Yeah.

Andy Braams: Okay. So there will be a link for subscribing to those different periodicals, within the description or within the YouTube [00:48:20] description in the metadata. Somehow you can...you'll be able to find that, if you're listening or watching, you'll be able to get that information.

Amanda Evans: And if you're listening, I mean, it's thebaptisthome.org/contactus.

If you go to the Contact Us page on the website, there is a form that you can fill out and tell us that you want to subscribe to the different options.

Andy Braams: Very good. Very good. Well again, thank you all for joining us and I look forward to hearing your feedback that you might receive on feedback from this particular episode at some point in the future.

Amanda Evans: Thanks.

Nathan Evans: Thanks.