

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Our MISSION:
This is *WHY* we're here. 5

Our VISION:
This is what it will look like if we are faithful to our mission. 6 - 7

Our STRATEGIES:
This is *HOW* we will work to accomplish our mission. 7 - 25

Strategy #1- Community Groups 7 - 12

Strategy #2- Worship as Story-telling 12 - 15

Strategy #3- Missional Pathways 15 - 18

Strategy #4- Life-on-Life Discipleship 18 - 24

Strategy #5- Church planting 24 - 25

Our CORE VALUES:
These are the things that motivate us 25

Our CULTURAL VALUES:
These are the things we hope to be known for 26

Our MINISTRY FLOW-CHART:
This is how it works 26

INTRODUCTION:

Being a missional church is all about a sense of identity, shared pervasively in a congregation that knows it is caught up into God's intent for the world. It comes from having heard, one way or another, the still, small voice that says, "You are mine. I have called you to me. I join you to my compassionate approach to the whole world for its healing. You are witnesses to what I have done and what I will yet do."

We are calling this "missional vocation."... (In missional churches) there is a sense that they are here for some reason, and that reason is bound up with the call of God. They are in service to something bigger than themselves. The reign of God has captivated them in Jesus Christ, and increasingly it defines them. The mission of God defines what their own mission must be. Their mission is not defined by some discernable group of potential clients for whom they might provide certain services. Nor is it defined by identifying potential members of their organization, as though the task is one of recruitment. Rather, for these congregations, it is a matter of faithfulness to a God-given vocation.

... For the church to understand itself to be missional ("sent") is to discern its vocation ("calling"). To be called by God is to be taken into a way of life and mission.

... When attentive to the voice of God, a congregation discerns not only that vocation that is shared across the whole church, but also its particular calling to express that vocation in its own place and time. This is discerned and followed together by a community. Its vocation is so much more than the sum total of all the personal vocations that in fact, it ends up being the other way around. *Personal* vocation is shaped and molded in the context of a community that has clarity about *its* vocation. A Christian's personal sense of vocation is a derivative from that "one hope of our calling" (Eph. 4:4) shared with the whole church, those "called out" (*ekklesia*) into the mission of God. (George R. Hunsberger)

Our MISSION:

This is what we have been *called* and *sent* by God to do. This is *WHY* we're here:

God's mission is to eternally make his GLORY known for all to see and enjoy¹ by triumphing over evil and working to redeem his people², and the entire creation³, from the guilt and the curse of sin. Jesus referred to this work as the coming of the KINGDOM of God into the world.⁴ He was referring to the long awaited triumph of God⁵ over all his enemies which would inaugurate a new age where God would once again be rightly related to his people⁶, and the sin and death would be undone.⁷ This was Jesus' *mission*. In Jesus, God has "tread our sins underfoot and hurled our iniquities into the depths of the sea."⁸ In Jesus, God has begun the work of making all things new.⁹ This was Jesus' GOSPEL. He came to make God's kingdom accessible to all who would repent and believe.¹⁰

The CHURCH is the body of Christ, and therefore, exists to continue his mission in the world in his absence. Our mission is *his* mission, given to us in the specific way he taught us to pray: "Our Father in heaven, your name be praised. *Your kingdom come.*"¹¹ Therefore,

**Our mission is to make Jesus' invisible kingdom visible¹²
in Winter Haven and the world.**

**This will require that we be a praying community of Jesus'
disciples who embody the truth of the gospel and spread the
gospel in both word and deed:**

**... one people¹³ – sharing life together¹⁴;
... a holy people¹⁵ – telling the story of our salvation.¹⁶
... a people on mission¹⁷ – serving our neighbors.¹⁸**

¹ Jonathan Edwards, "The End for Which God Created the World." See also John Piper, *God's Passion for His Glory* (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Books, 1998).

² Galatians 4:4-6

³ Colossians 1:20

⁴ Matthew 4:17; Matthew 5:3ff.; Matthew 13; Mark 1:14-15; Luke 1:31-33; Luke 8:1; Luke 9:1-2.

⁵ Isaiah 40:9; Isaiah 52:7; cf. Colossians 2:14-15

⁶ This promise is contained in the prophetic phrase: "And I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hosea 2:14-23; Zechariah 8:1-8; 13:9; Revelation 21:3).

⁷ The Westminster Confession of Faith Shorter Catechism (A#17) states, "The fall brought mankind into an estate of *sin* and *misery*." Shorter Catechism A#18 also speaks of "guilt" and "corruption." We are using the words of "sin" and "death" here to refer to the same categories the Catechism speaks of.

⁸ Micah 7:19

⁹ Isaiah 65:17ff; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Revelation 21:5

¹⁰ Mark 1:15

¹¹ Matthew 6:9ff.; cf. Luke 11:2.

¹² We have worded this intentionally. The church is not called to "build" or "expand" or "bring" God's kingdom, but to "enter" and "receive" it and witness to his active Presence.

¹³ Ephesians 4:1-6; Acts 4:32

¹⁴ Acts 2:42-45; 4:32-35; Hebrews 13:3ff., 16

¹⁵ Leviticus 17; Deuteronomy 7:6; 1 Peter 1:16; 1 Peter 2:9-10

¹⁶ Acts 1:8; 2 Corinthians 5:18-21; Psalm 96:3; 1 Peter 3:15

¹⁷ Genesis 12:1-3; Psalm 96; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8

¹⁸ Luke 10:25-37

Our VISION:

This is *WHAT* it will look like if we are faithful to our mission:

COMMUNITY-FORMATION: A NEW PEOPLE

The promise of the gospel is a NEW PEOPLE- who are rightly related to God and one another, and who participate in the ongoing work of God in the world. Jesus' invisible kingdom is made visible in this *COMMUNITY* of his disciples who are committed to the alternative lifestyle, the abundant life, he invites us into when he calls us to follow him. The early Christian community was called "the Way"¹⁹ because they were committed to an alternate way of life - an alternate way of *thinking* about relationships, time, money and possessions, power and leadership. Jesus means for his people, the church, to be a preview of what life will one day be like in His eternal kingdom.

Therefore, we will work to cultivate such a community in our city by participating together in the practices that shape us as a people who *SHARE* life together, *SERVE* our neighbors and *TELL* the story of salvation.

PERSONAL TRANSFORMATION: NEW HEARTS

*The promise of the gospel is NEW HEARTS*²⁰ – lives supernaturally changed by the power of the Holy Spirit. As the church witnesses to the abundant life Jesus offers, it invites all who would to participate in his kingdom come. This, in turn, requires that we purposefully *EVANGELIZE* and *DISCIPLE* people to live in the kingdom of God, putting into practice *all* the teachings of Jesus in the unique circumstances of their lives. Following Jesus demands nothing less than a radical personal conversion of thought²¹, character²², and practice²³ (i.e. knowing, being, and doing).

**Therefore, we will work to make disciples who:
...know²⁴, love²⁵, and rejoice²⁶ in God in Jesus;
... are committed and skilled at practicing God's ordinary means²⁷ in community;
... are committed and skilled to participate in His mission in the world in both word and deed.**

¹⁹ Acts 9:2; 18:25-26; 19:9; 24:14,22.

²⁰ Ezekiel 36:25-27; cf. Ezekiel 11:19-20; Jeremiah 31:33; John 3:1ff; Luke 8:15; Acts 15:8-9; Romans 6:4ff; 2 Corinthians 5:17

²¹ Romans 12:1-2; Ephesians 4:17-18, 23; Philippians 2:5

²² John 3:1-8; Galatians 5:22-24

²³ Ephesians 4:25ff.; Ephesians 5:8-9, 15ff.; Colossians 3:7-10

²⁴ Proverbs 3:5-6; John 17:3; Philippians 3:10

²⁵ Deuteronomy 6:4-5; cf. Matthew 22:37ff.

²⁶ Psalm 40:16; Psalm 37:4; Philippians 4:4

²⁷ WCF Shorter Catechism Q#85: "What doth God require of us, that we may escape his wrath and curse, due us for our sin?" A. "... God requireth of us faith in Jesus Christ, repentance unto life, *with the diligent use of all the outward MEANS* whereby Christ communicateth to us the benefits of redemption" (cf. Acts 2:28; 1 Corinthians 11:24-25; Colossians 3:16).

GOSPEL MULTIPLICATION: A NEW CITY

*The promise of the gospel is a NEW CITY.*²⁸ We dream of a city filled with the knowledge of the glory of God; a city where the King rules in kindness, where peace is waged and every person loves his neighbor; a city where every unwanted child has a family and a home, where orphans and widows are safe and cared for, where the poor are given hope, the hungry are fed, the oppressed are set free. We dream of a world where every tribe, tongue, and people have heard and the knees of the nations bow in worship to the true King; a world where justice (*misphat*), mercy (*hesed*), and peace (*shalom*) is the rule of life; where every tear is wiped away by God himself; a world without AIDS and malaria, war and warlords ... no crying... no pain... no death... All things made new!

Therefore, we will work to ignite a gospel movement of churches and ministries that will change Winter Haven and the world by spreading the gospel in word and deed.

Our STRATEGIES:

This is HOW we will work to accomplish our mission:

**Strategy #1: COMMUNITY GROUPS
ONE people: making Jesus' invisible kingdom visible
by sharing life together**

The church is *KOINONIA*.²⁹ Literally, the word means “to have in common, to share,” referring to the common purpose, mission, values, and practices the church shares together. The church experiences a *common life*³⁰ - a Spirit-created “oneness” that acts as a powerful witness to the truth of the gospel.³¹ *The church is the COMMUNITY of Jesus' kingdom. It embodies the truth of the gospel in its shared life.* Leslie Newbigin has rightly observed, “How is it possible that the gospel should be credible, that people should come to believe that the power which has the last word in human affairs is represented by a man hanging on a cross? ... the only answer, the only hermeneutic of the gospel, is a congregation of men and women who believe it and live by it.”³² This is the church’s calling – to be the practical demonstration of the reality of its message.³³ George Hunsberger writes,

²⁸ Revelation 21:1-5; cf. Isaiah 65:17ff; Isaiah 26

²⁹ Romans 15:26; 2 Corinthians 9:13; Philippians 2:1; Hebrews 13:16; 1 John 1:7

³⁰ Acts 2:44; Acts 4:32

³¹ John 17:20-21: “I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me” (ESV). Then, immediately following, in John 17:22-23: “The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me” (ESV).

³² Leslie Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralistic Society* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989) pp. 227-232.

³³ Stanley Grenz, *Renewing the Center: Evangelical Theology in a Post-theological Era* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 200), p. 308.

Like Jesus, the church is to embody the reign of God by living under its authority. ... Before the church is called to do or say anything, it is called and sent to be the unique community of those who live under the reign of God. The church displays the firstfruits of the forgiven and forgiving people of God who are brought together across the rubble of dividing walls that have crumbled under the weight of the cross. It is the harbinger of the new humanity that lives in genuine community, a form of companionship and wholes that humanity craves. ... The church's love and unity holds ultimate significance for the world as the visible basis of the gospel's power and legitimacy. In fact, the church itself is the promise of the gospel.³⁴

The Need for Community Groups

The church's oneness, its *koinonia*, must be witnessed to in the way the it structures itself. The church's structures are to incarnate its message to its setting. In other words, the church should not be organized for growth or efficiency, but toward the goal of being the body of Christ. The structures of the church should facilitate the inner workings of the body.³⁵

This is challenging. We live in a fragmented culture where family, friends, school, church, and work are all social spaces we inhabit with no overlap. The relationships we manage in each of these social spaces are completely different and geographically separated from one another.³⁶ With all of these different competing communities it is impossible to invest deeply enough in any one group to achieve the "oneness" we are called to. And this is the very thing that keeps us from being the church. What is required in an intentional converging of the various social spaces we belong to into a common life. The church should not simply be one more community we have to juggle with the rest. It should be our primary community as we live out the mission of God in all of the other places he sends us.

It was the pattern of the early church, according to Acts, to meet corporately in the temple courts and then to meet in homes.³⁷ That is significant. The church simply cannot function as it is described in Scripture unless its corporate life is channeled through an interconnected network of small groups. We call these small groups "Community Groups (CG)." The purpose of a CG is that a small, intimate group of people (5-8 families) would *share life* together and in the process rediscover and embody the kind of "oneness" the first Christians experienced.

The GUIDING PRINCIPLES of Community Groups

To achieve this kind of life-sharing, the guiding principles on which our Community Groups operate are: spontaneity, availability, frequency, and geography.³⁸

- 1) **Spontaneity.** Genuine community is found by belonging to a small band of people who spontaneously go in and out of each other's lives. While there are gatherings that are planned, most events are unplanned and spontaneous.
- 2) **Availability.** Genuine community occurs when we see being available to one another as more important than most of the other "important" stuff. The goal is for members of a CG to develop a deep, long-term commitment to one another and to faithfully befriend one another in their discipleship to Jesus.
- 3) **Frequency.** People who experience genuine community spend a lot of time together. The first Christians met "daily" (cf. Acts 2:46-27). Meeting frequently requires a willingness to radically restructure our lives, our time, and our priorities. We encourage Community Groups to have planned gatherings at least twice a month, and also to plan a social event and to participate in a "missions pathway" together on a monthly basis. But this is just the beginning.

³⁴ Darell Guder, ed., *Missional Church* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998), pp. 103-104.

³⁵ David E. Fitch, *The Great Giveaway* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2005), p. 40.

³⁶ Tim Keller, "Gospel-Community" from MCM October 2001.

³⁷ Acts 2:46.

³⁸ See Randy Frazee, *The Connecting Church* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2001)

- 4) **Geography.** All genuine community is experienced by a group of people who live in close proximity to each other – the closer the better. It is ideal that those in a Community Group should be able to walk to one another’s houses. However, the general rule is that members of a Community Group should share the same “traffic patterns” (i.e. the same schools, grocery stores, restaurants, gas stations, etc.) This allows for spontaneity, availability, and frequency.

The LIFE-SHARING of Community Groups

More specifically, the life-sharing of Community Groups is sustained by the following:

- 1) **Shared practices.** The life of every Community Group is structured around the common practices we are engaging in as a church – Community Bible Reading (CBR); Scripture memory; Family worship, evangelism, etc. Community Group meeting times are designed to reinforce these practices so that they might be incorporated into the lives of individual members. The general structure of a meeting would include the following: singing, prayer, reflection on CBR and Scripture memory, confession of sin.
- 2) **Shared meals.** A meal is shared at every Community Group meeting and groups are encouraged to have meals together in each other’s homes as often as possible.³⁹
- 3) **Shared mission:** Each Community Group is encouraged to choose a local “missional pathway” to participate in as a group at least once a month; and also to participate on an ongoing basis in a global “missional pathway” (i.e. prayer, financial support, short-term mission trip, etc). Each CG is also required to be praying for their “neighbors” in the hope of seeing them come to faith. The CG should be looking for opportunities to serve their neighbors with the goal of inviting them to participate in CG meetings.
- 4) **Shared possessions:** The early Christians had all things in common. They did not consider their possessions their own but shared all they had for the good of body.
- 5) **Shared life:** The ultimate goal is that every Community Group would function “outside” of the meeting times – that the members of the Community Group would (1) prioritize their relationships and commit to faithfully befriending one another; (2) easily move in and out of one another’s daily life; (3) plan to be together often; and (4) live near one another.

Community Groups are intended to be the primary “church” experience for all who are a part of Redeemer. “Church” is not a building or an organization or a 1-hr event on Sunday morning. It is a people who belong to one another⁴⁰ - comforting,⁴¹ encouraging⁴², and caring⁴³ for one another, bearing one another’s burdens⁴⁴, teaching one another⁴⁵, confessing sins to one another⁴⁶, honoring and devoting themselves to one another.⁴⁷ Community Groups, therefore, are not one of the many programs Redeemer offers, but the main way we accomplish evangelism, assimilation, discipleship, pastoral care, mission and mercy.

Leadership FLOWCHART for Community Groups

Community Groups, however, do not function outside of the oversight of the spiritual leadership of Redeemer. They are to carry out the vision and the strategies of Redeemer in their particular neighborhood context while remaining connected to the church’s leadership for continued care

³⁹ For the significance of meal-sharing, see Eugene Peterson, *Christ Plays in Ten Thousand Places* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2005), p. 200ff.; Brennan Manning, *A Glimpse of Jesus* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 2004); Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together* (San Francisco: Harper and Row Publishers, 1954).

⁴⁰ Romans 12:5

⁴¹ 1 Thessalonians 4:18; 2 Corinthians 1:3-4

⁴² Romans 14:19; Hebrews 10:24-25

⁴³ 1 Corinthians 12:25;

⁴⁴ Galatians 6:2

⁴⁵ Romans 15:14; Colossians 3:16

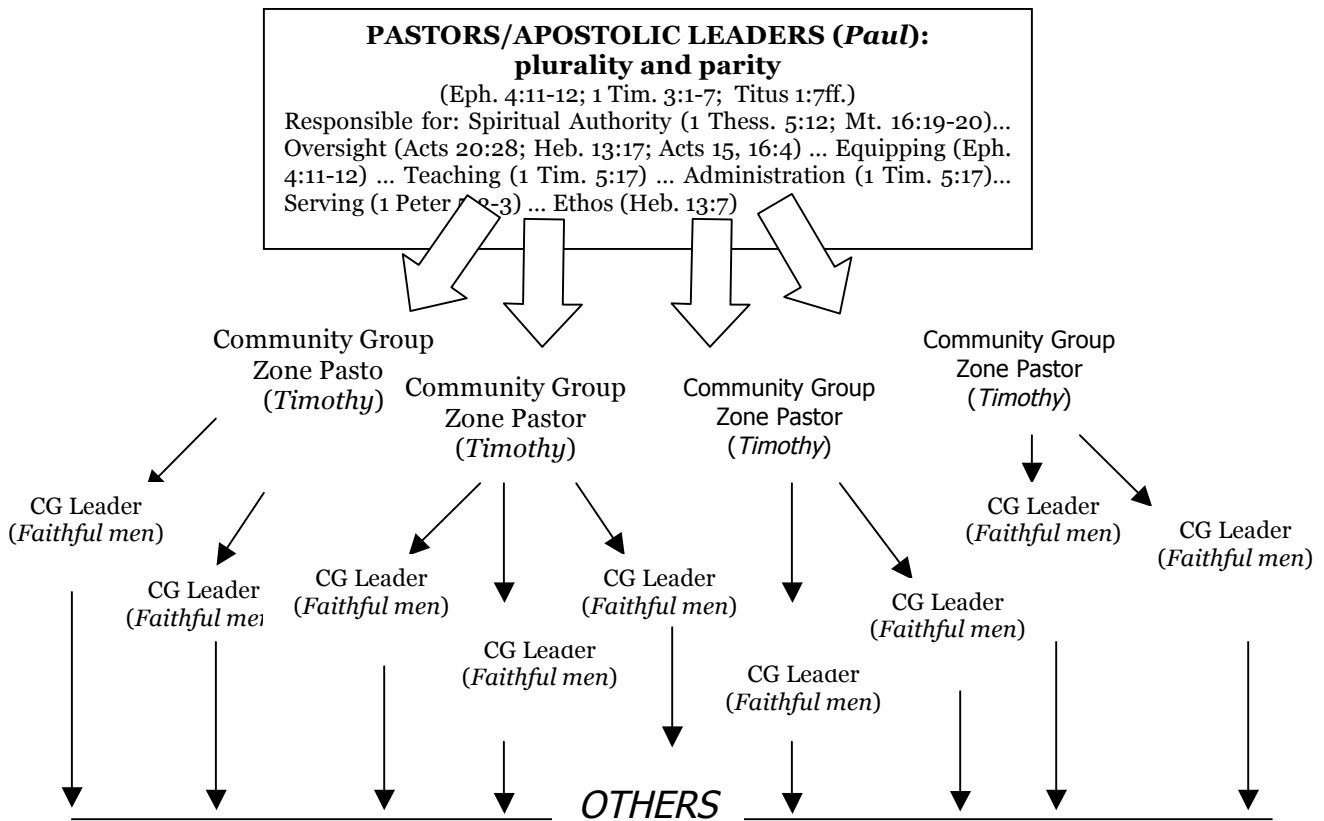
⁴⁶ James 5:16

⁴⁷ Romans 12:10

and support. This is facilitated through a simple discipleship structure (see figure A on the next page) which allows for the passing on of vision, leadership, and spiritual care from the pastors to the Community Group leaders and through them to the congregation at large. This discipleship structure is based upon Paul’s instructions to Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:2: “what you (*Timothy*) have heard from me (*Paul*) in the presence of many witnesses entrust to *faithful me* who will be able to teach *others* also.”⁴⁸

Discipleship is essential to the church’s health and effectiveness. Pastors are not to exclusively own the ministry within the church. As the apostle Paul says, “The body is not made up of one part but of many.”⁴⁹ Pastors have been given to the church by God for the purpose of equipping the church itself for the work of ministry.⁵⁰ Even the ministry of edification and spiritual care belongs to the body itself (and the pastors as a unique part of the body) and not to the pastoral leadership alone.⁵¹ This structure guards against the body becoming too dependent upon the pastors and keeps the body functioning as a body, with each part contributing to the mutual edification and care of the whole

Figure A:
Leadership flowchart



⁴⁸ Herb Hodges, *Fox Fever* (Spiritual Life Ministries, 2006). Hodges notes, “There are four generations of disciples in that one verse.”

⁴⁹ 1 Corinthians 12:14

⁵⁰ Ephesians 4:11ff.

⁵¹ See the Westminster Confession of Faith: “All saints that are united to Jesus Christ their head by his Spirit, and by faith, have fellowship with him... And being united to one another in love, they have communion in each other’s gifts and graces; and are obliged to the performance of such duties, public and private, as do conduce to their mutual good, both in the inward and outward man.” (WCF, XXVI.1)

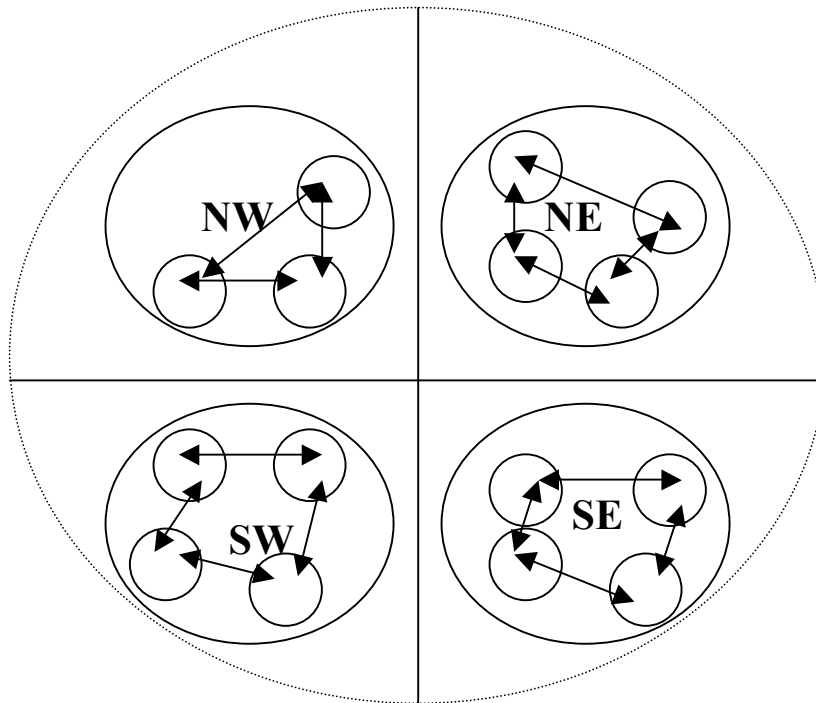
Community Group ZONES

Winter Haven is easily broken up into four quadrants:

- **NORTHEAST** (NORTH from Central Ave. to Lucerne Park Road; EAST from 1st Street to Hwy 27)
- **SOUTHEAST** (SOUTH from Central Ave. to 540A/Thompson Nursery Road; EAST from 1st Street to Hwy 27)
- **NORTHWEST** (NORTH from Central Ave to Hwy 92; WEST from 1st Street to the Polk Parkway)
- **SOUTHWEST** (SOUTH from Central Ave to 540 A/Eloise Loop Road; WEST from 1st Street to the Polk Parkway)

These four quadrants will, over time, become the four Community Group zones within which Redeemer’s Community Group ministry operates (see Figure B below). Each Community Group Zone will be overseen by a zone pastor. These zone pastors are then responsible for promoting inter-connectedness among the Community Groups in their zone. They are also responsible for recruiting, training, and supervising (i.e. personally discipling)⁵² the Community Group Leaders within their zone. Under them, the community group leaders are responsible for leading their groups faithfully in the practices of life-sharing according the guiding principles of Community Groups (spontaneity, availability, frequency, and geography). They are also responsible for shepherding and discipling those under their care (in cooperation with the pastoral leadership).

Figure B:
Community Group Zones



⁵² Cf. Strategy #4: Discipleship (pp. 15-

Our GOAL

Our goal is simple: to have a Community Group in every “neighborhood” in Winter Haven.⁵³ We believe this is the most faithful and the most effective way to faithfully be the *community* of God’s kingdom, “sharing life together” as we are called to in the Scriptures

Strategy #2: WORSHIP STORY-TELLING
A HOLY people: making Jesus’ invisible kingdom visible
by telling the story of salvation

*The church is ECCLESIA.*⁵⁴ The word has a political orientation and means, basically, “an assembly.” Literally, it combines two words to render the translation: “called-out ones.” But the word also carries the connotation of being “called-together.” So then, the *ecclesia* refers to those who have been “called-out” of the world by the saving acts of God and then “called-together” in worship to pay attention to God and retell the story of their salvation.⁵⁵ The church is a holy people, created by God’s saving acts. In Scripture, God consistently calls his people to a holy life as their loving and faithful response to what he has already done to save them.⁵⁶ Thus the church has a story to tell. *The church is the MESSENGER of Jesus’ kingdom. It is responsible for spreading Jesus’ gospel by word (i.e. telling the story of salvation).*

The Need for Story-telling

Postmodernism rejects any notion of a “metanarrative” – an overarching story that gives focus, commonality, and meaning to life.⁵⁷ The result is a culture of people with no sense of self, no definition, no identity. Yet, this is exactly what Christianity has to offer the postmodern world – a genuine metanarrative that is universally available and applicable. The Story of God. The church is defined by this Story - the Story of God coming to earth, wrapped in human flesh, to redeem his people and all of creation from the guilt and curse of sin. The Story is beyond us and it comes to make its claim on us. Within it we find an identity and a mission. It is the only Story big enough to tell us who we are, where we came from, and why we are here. It is a Story that must be told.⁵⁸

Worship as Story-telling

Historically, the way the church has chosen to retell the Story is through its worship. Robert Webber writes, “Worship is the story in motion. ... The story is the content of worship. In worship we recite the story, we proclaim the story, we sing the story, we feast to the story, and we are called to live out the story. The heart and substance of worship is *the* story.”⁵⁹ When the church gathers to worship, it gathers to retell and to reenact the Story of Jesus – his death and resurrection, his victory over the powers of darkness, his place of power and authority over all the universe. Worship trains us in a worldview.⁶⁰

⁵³ We define neighborhoods according to traffic patterns and shared geographical markers (ex. supermarkers, shopping plazas, schools, etc.).

⁵⁴ Jesus only mentions the “church” twice in the Gospels. Both times he uses the word *ecclesia* (cf. Matthew 16:18; Matthew 18:17).

⁵⁵ See Sinclair Ferguson, *Unpublished class lecture notes*, Reformed Theological Seminary: January 1999.

⁵⁶ Exodus 20:1ff; Deuteronomy 5:6ff; Ephesians 4:1ff.; Romans 12:1ff; Colossians 3:5ff.

⁵⁷ Marva Dawn, *Royal Waste of Time* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999), p. 45.

⁵⁸ Psalm 96; Isaiah 52:7; Romans 10:14-17; 1 Peter 2:9-10

⁵⁹ Robert Webber, *Renew Your Worship* (Hendrickson Publishers: Peabody, Massachusetts, 1997), p. 55.

See also Michael Horton, *A Better Way: Rediscovering the Drama of God-centered Worship* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002).

⁶⁰ Simon Chan, *Liturgical Theology* (IVP Academic, 2006), p. 62.

An example of this: in Exodus 12, the Lord gives elaborate instructions to the nation of Israel concerning the celebration of the Passover feast. They were to reenact the Passover event with exact detail, complete with a menu of unleavened bread and bitter herbs (not exactly gourmet!). And they were commanded to tell the story to their children.⁶¹ The purpose of the Feast was to form the nation of Israel into a holy people, a redeemed people, a people with a salvation story. It was to remind them of their basic identity. The message to the children in Israel could not have been more forceful: “This is who you are!”... “This is why we live the way we do!”... “This is our Story!”

The church’s worship functions in the same way. The purpose of worship is to form the church into a holy people, a redeemed people, a people with a salvation story. Worship is a culture-forming event. The church’s basic identity and function are powerfully formed as the Story is retold in worship, week after week, year after year. Worship as story-telling acts as a call to the holy obedience God demands: “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. ... You shall have no other gods before me.”⁶²

The Four-fold Pattern of Worship

Christian worship most powerfully tells the story of Jesus primarily through its liturgy, its intentional structure. This is the four-fold pattern liturgical pattern that Redeemer is committed to in its worship: gathering, telling, feasting, and sending:⁶³

- *Gathering.* In worship, we are being called out from the world and called together before God. Therefore, worship must begin with an ascent - a deliberate “gathering” that calls the church to leave the world and its cares behind and to approach God.⁶⁴ This “gathering” is a spiritual journey which people travel. God is the host and the church is being invited into his presence. The elements of the gathering include: greeting, a call to worship, confession of sin, prayers, songs of adoration and confession, and the assurance of pardon.
- *Telling.* Once gathered, the church retells the story of Scripture, the story of salvation in Jesus. Historically, this has been called the “Service of the Word.” In the Service of the Word the church tells the story of Jesus, which Robert Webber summarizes: “The time is fulfilled! Messiah has come! He was crucified, buried and rose from the dead! He is victorious over the powers of darkness! He has ascended into heaven and will return again to judge all evil! Repent and enter the kingdom of God!”⁶⁵ The elements of the Service of the Word include: Old Testament and New Testament readings, prayers, creeds and confessions of faith, songs of response, and a sermon.
- *Feasting.* In hearing again the story of their salvation, the church is then called to respond in faith. Historically, this has been called the “Service of the Table.” The elements of the Service of the Table include: confession of faith, communion, songs of response, anointing the sick, and blessing the children.
- *Sending.* The church is a missionary people, formed and sent into the world by the Spirit to engage in the mission of God. The worship service begins with a call to leave the world and it ends with a call to go back out into the world to live our part in the unfolding Drama. For this reason, the service concludes with songs of consecration and a benediction – a word of promise that as we go, Christ goes with us to bless us and care for us.⁶⁶

The Christian Year

Christian worship also tells the story of Jesus through its calendar. According to the pattern of

⁶¹ Exodus 12:26-27; cf. Joshua 4:6, 21-22

⁶² Exodus 20:2-3

⁶³ See Robert Webber’s books on worship.

⁶⁴ 2 Chronicles 5:11-14

⁶⁵ Adapted from Robert Webber. Robert Webber, *Renew Your Worship* (Hendrickson Publishers: Peabody, Massachusetts, 1997), p. 55.

⁶⁶ Matthew 28:20

the Scripture, time is marked by God's saving acts – i.e. the Exodus from Egypt, the incarnation of Jesus, his crucifixion and resurrection, the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost, etc. In the Old Testament, Israel's worship included a series of feasts and celebrations meant to be a commemoration, or a re-enactment, of these saving acts of God in their history. These feasts forced upon Israel a "disciplined remembrance"⁶⁷ of the events that constituted them as God's holy people, set apart from the other nations by their salvation. The celebration of the feasts served as a constant reminder to Israel that they were to live into this God-created identity, to embrace their place in His mission, to be his holy people.

In the same way, the Christian church, historically, has ordered and celebrated God's saving acts according to what is called the "Christian Year" or the "Christian Liturgical Calendar." The Christian year is made up of a series of "seasons" that deliberately order and retell the story of the Scripture - Jesus' birth, life, resurrection, ascension and the outpouring of the Spirit (see Figure-C below). Mother's Day, Memorial Day, the Fourth of July, Thanksgiving – these events are a part of the American civic calendar and celebrating them is a powerful identity-forming practice, cultivating gratitude, patriotism, American values, and the American way of life. But as Christians, these are not our time-markers, because the American story is not our "controlling Story," the story of Jesus is. Therefore, Christian worship must have different time-markers. It must tell a different story so that by celebrating God's saving acts in Jesus the church may be reminded to live into its God-created identity, to embrace God's mission, to be his holy people.

Figure C:
Christian Calendar- rough outline

ADVENT: the four weeks before Christmas. Advent is a time of preparation and longing for the coming Messiah.

CHRISTMAS: Celebration of the birth of Jesus. (The Christmas season lasts 12 days beginning on Christmas day and ending on January 6.)

EPIPHANY: January 6. It is a commemoration of the visit of the Magi symbolizing the world-wide expansion of the gospel. The season of Epiphany lasts through the beginning of Lent.

LENT: 40 days prior to Easter. A time of fasting and self-examination in imitation of Jesus' 40 days in the wilderness. Lent begins on ASH WEDNESDAY.

HOLY WEEK: the days between Palm Sunday and Easter. These days observe the events in the life of Jesus between his entry into Jerusalem through his crucifixion and burial. Holy Week includes MAUNDAY THURSDAY, GOOD FRIDAY, and HOLY SATURDAY.

EASTER: celebration of Jesus' resurrection.

PENTECOST: 50 days after Easter – a commemoration of the Spirit being poured out on the church on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2).

⁶⁷ *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, Downer's Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1998), p. 702.

The liturgical calendar invites us into the life of the Trinity. Every *Advent* Season, we longingly look to *God, the Father*, for the fulfillment of the promise of salvation in the coming Messiah. Then, during *Christmas* and *Easter* we celebrate the entrance of *God, the Son*, into the world, his death and resurrection by which he saves us from the guilt and curse of sin, and his Ascension to the right hand of God the Father where he is interceded for us. And then finally, during *Pentecost*, we celebrate the outpouring of *God, the Holy Spirit*, upon the church to empower us for our mission in the world – to make disciples of all nations.

This is our story.

The Worshipping Community: God’s Holy People

As God’s holy people, the church will look different, act different, think different, and adopt different values and priorities. The church’s holiness is supported and nourished by the Story the church tells in its worship through its liturgy and by participating in the liturgical calendar. It is *because* we have a salvation story that we are called to live holy lives. Therefore, only as we are understood and are formed by the Story will we . This is what worship does.

The worship liturgy invites us into a distinct way of life. In the *gathering* we are shaped as a people called out of the world - a people constituted by the Spirit. We are reminded that we are not self-defined, by that we exist for God and his glory in all things. In *telling* the story we are formed as a people whose lives are ordered and nourished by the word of God, a people committed to hearing and obeying. We are reminded that In *feasting* on the body and blood of Jesus we are We are reminded that we follow the Lamb of God and that he sends us out as lambs among wolves. We are also reminded that we are not just people, but a people, a redeemed community characterized by sacrificial love and generosity. We learn what love looks like and that to follow him is to lay down our lives for one another just as he laid down his life for us.⁶⁸ In the *sending*, we are defined as God’s missionary people, called and sent into the world to participate in his mission. We are reminded that we have a vocation, a purpose.

The GOAL of Worship as Story-telling

Our goal is to tell the Story of salvation so clearly and powerfully in our worship (through the weekly liturgy and the church calendar) that we would begin to faithfully take our place in it as God’s holy people, and that those who don’t know Jesus may hear and see, believe, and begin to live into his Story as well. Even more specifically, our goal is that our worship would equip us to be *messengers* of God’s kingdom, faithfully “telling the story of salvation” in our city and the world.

Strategy #3: MISSIONAL PATHWAYS
A people ON MISSION: making Jesus’ invisible kingdom visible by serving our neighbors

*The church is MARTYRIA.*⁶⁹ The word means “witness”⁷⁰ but it carries a specific connotation (especially in Revelation). It is the word from which we get our word martyr – one who gives their life for the faith. From the call of Abraham in Genesis 12, God has been forming for himself a people through whom he could bless all the families of the earth - a “kingdom of priests”⁷¹ who

⁶⁸ 1 John 3:16; 3:23; 4:9-11

⁶⁹ Matthew 10:18; Mark 13:9; Acts 4:33; Revelation 12:17; 19:10; 20:4

⁷⁰ An Old Testament metaphor for God’s missionary people also: cf. Isaiah 43:10; 43:12; 44:8

⁷¹ Exodus 19:6; 1 Peter 2:5,9; Revelation 1:6; 5:0; 20:6

would serve him and be his witnesses in the world. *Martyria* highlights the personal cost of such witness – Jesus’ followers willingly sacrifice to put His kingdom on display in their works of healing, mercy, and justice. *The church is the SERVANT of the kingdom. It is responsible for spreading Jesus’ gospel by its deeds (i.e. serving its neighbors).*

The Need for Mission

Our culture is overrun by consumerism and the dream of individual prosperity. The result is people who are enslaved to the pursuit of personal comfort and affluence. We are trained, from an early age, to see ourselves first and foremost as consumers with needs and desires to be met. This consumer mind-set puts the self at the center of life, and all the world’s commodities in order around the self.⁷² The church can quickly become swept away into the cultural flow and begin to work only to meet the “felt needs” of spiritual consumers.

When this happens something fundamental to our humanity is lost. We were created to live for something greater than the pursuit of our own comfort and pleasure. James Brownson writes,

“Glaringly absent (in the consumerism of our culture) is any understanding of a purpose for human life that extends beyond ourselves and the gratification of our own needs and desires. The problem is not that meeting needs is wrong; it’s when meeting needs moves to the center of our lives, the result is self-absorption and narcissism. ... What the gospel offers, by contrast, is the opportunity to be drawn into something larger than ourselves – into God’s overflowing love that moves out in ever-widening circles, embracing the whole of creation. The gospel sees our humanity not in terms of needs to be met, but in terms of capacities and gifts to be offered in God’s gracious service. We are created not to consume, but to know God, not merely to meet our own needs but to participate in God’s life and mission. ... In the final analysis, the biblical understanding of salvation is not merely that our lives will be set right again at last. The biblical understanding of salvation is that our lives become swept up into something larger and greater than ourselves, into God’s purposes for the world.”

We need to recover a sense of our “sent-ness” – our mission – simply because it is mission that defines the church. The church is in the world on purpose, and to the degree that it fails to be on mission in the world it fails to be the church.

Not Missions, but Missional

Milfred Minatrea, in his book *Shaped By God’s Heart*, offers a very helpful distinction between a “missions-minded” church and a missional church. He offers three differences. First, a missions-minded church emphasizes *sending* and *supporting* missionaries; but a missional church emphasizes *being* and *doing*. Second, a missions-minded church is *representative* (i.e. there are a select few who are called as missionaries and everyone else supports them prayerfully and financially); a missional church is *participative* (everyone is a missionary!). And finally, the mission-minded church perceives mission as *one expression of its ministry*; the missional church perceives mission as the *essence of its existence*.⁷³

Missional Pathways – Local and Global

Most Christians know they should be more engaged with the needs of their city and the world, they just don’t know how to go about identifying and feel ill-equipped to meet those needs. Tim Chester has made the observation that poverty is not as much about a lack of income as it is about marginalization and powerlessness.. He writes, “At root, poverty is about broken relationships. Poverty is social as well as economic. Poverty is about marginalization, vulnerability, isolation, and exclusion.” It’s not that people in the church don’t have a heart to meet the needs of the poor and the powerless, it’s that they don’t know who they are and what needs they have.

⁷² Bill Hull, *The Disciple-making Pastor* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2007): pg. 36.

⁷³ Milfred Minsatrea, *Shaped By God’s Heart* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004)

To help with this, Redeemer is working to develop strategic partnerships with others who are spreading the gospel in our city and world in word and deed to give us direction and focus as we move out in mission to serve our neighbors. We call these partnerships “missional pathways.”

There are two types of missional pathways: *local* and *global*. Local pathways include partnerships with ministries and agencies in our city that are intentionally spreading the gospel in word and deed (Salvation Army, Meals on Wheels, The Mission, Community Pregnancy Center, etc.). Global pathways refer to partnerships with ministries and agencies that are intentionally spreading the gospel in word and deed globally (denominational missions agencies, World Vision, Tearfund, etc.) Each Community Group at Redeemer is encouraged to have ongoing participation in both a local and a global missional pathway (on a monthly basis) as a means of developing a shared mission within the group (see pg. 9).

Four Guiding Principles of Missional Pathways

The guiding principles for Redeemer Community Groups participation in missional pathways are as follows. These are the ideas that

- 1) Proclamation:⁷⁴ We hope to partner with ministries and agencies that specifically seek to spread the gospel of Jesus in word. The proclamation of who God is, who we are, and what has been made possible through Jesus Christ (the kingdom of God has arrived!) is central to what it means to be Christian, as well as what it means to be evangelistic. We want to be involved with ministries and agencies who are not ashamed of the gospel, who believe that “*there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.*”⁷⁵
- 2) Demonstration:⁷⁶ We hope to partner with ministries and agencies that seek to spread the gospel of Jesus in deed. Matthew’s gospel summarizes Jesus’ work in this following verse: “*And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people.*”⁷⁷ In other words, for Jesus, evangelism meant BOTH proclaiming the good news of the kingdom’s arrival, as well as demonstrating the good news of the kingdom’s arrival. The gospel is for the whole person – physically, emotionally, socially, and spiritually. Meeting physical needs, healing emotional stress, fighting social brokenness, etc. – in the name of Jesus - IS evangelism.
- 3) Intersection: We hope that through these missional pathways our lives would more naturally intersect with the poor and the needy in our city and world. When two things intersect, they come in contact. They actually touch. The goal of a Community Group’s participation in a missional pathway is “regular contact.” This entails much more than writing a check or simply delivering clothing, food, etc to the back door of a building. It implies real “contact –touching, shaking a hand, sharing a hug, looking someone who is hurting in the eyes and expressing the compassion and love of Christ over a cup of coffee.
- 4) Ownership: Ultimately, we hope that each of Redeemer’s Community Groups can find a missional pathway that they can own as a group. The goal is long-term, life-on-life investment. Again, this requires regular, ongoing contact – regular interaction with the leaders of the ministry, regular visits by CG members, and a consistent presence (at least monthly) at volunteering events .

⁷⁴ We are called to spread the gospel in word (cf. Psalm 96; Romans 10:14ff.; 1 Peter 2:9-10).

⁷⁵ Acts 4:12

⁷⁶ We are also called to spread the gospel in deed – to do justice and love mercy, to care for the widow and the orphan, etc. (cf. Micah 6:8; Isaiah 1:17; Amos 5:24; Matthew 6:33; Matthew 25:31ff.; James 1:27).

⁷⁷ Matthew 4:23. This is the consistent ministry model of Jesus – both proclamation and demonstration (Mark 1:39; Luke 4:38-33; cf. Luke 4:18-19).

Directional Markers: Topography and Geography

As we move out in mission, there are two “directional markers” that help us to know specifically where and to whom we should be going. They are based upon the principles of *topography* and *geography*.

- 1) Topography. The church should be intentionally going to the low places. The Bible indicates a downwardly mobile lifestyle and orientation for those whose lives have been and are being transformed by the gospel of Jesus Christ. Our lives have a downward focus – after all, Jesus’ mission was one of humiliation, literally coming “down” from the glory of heaven to the sin and ugliness of earth, becoming a servant in human form (Phil 2.5ff). Therefore, to be faithful to our “sent-ness”, we must go to the hungry, the thirsty, the poor, and the broken. We must go where there is pain and suffering and share the comfort and Presence of Jesus. We must go where there are tears and offer the joy of Jesus’ kingdom. We must go where there is death and violence and war and work for the peace of Jesus’ kingdom.
- 2) Geography. The church should be intentionally going to all nations.⁷⁸ We are called to be Jesus’ witnesses “*in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.*”⁷⁹ Therefore, to be faithful to our “sent-ness”, we must go to the people and places – the unreached people groups of the world - that have not yet heard the good news of the gospel.

The GOAL of Missional Pathways

Our goal is simple: to serve our neighbors, not to make a name for ourselves. The goal of Redeemer is not Redeemer- it is changed city, a new world. and in doing so to make Jesus’ invisible kingdom of love and peace visible to our city and our world.

Strategy #4: LIFE-ON-LIFE DISCIPLESHIP
Making Jesus’ invisible kingdom visible by training
people to live in the kingdom of God

The church is an alternate community who embody a new way of living under the reign of God in Jesus. In evangelism the church invites its friends and neighbors to participate in the shared life, recognize its fruit, and see that it is good.⁸⁰ Thus, in turn, effective evangelism will require that the church disciple those who join its fellowship because salvation does not come apart from repentance and faith.⁸¹ Following Jesus demands nothing less than a radical personal conversion of thought, character, and practice (i.e. knowing, being, and doing). This is the job assignment Jesus left us with:⁸² we are to make disciples.

“The aim of the church is not simply to make a given culture more just or more caring, but to shape a people into an alternate way of life. Missional communities representing the reign of God will be intentional about providing the space, the time, and the resources for people to unlearn old patterns and learn new ways of living that reveal God’s transforming and healing power. As a culture-forming endeavor, Christianity is “a cultivating process that produces people in a particular way.” ... Tertullian declared: “Christians are not born, they are made.” Just as the various forces and influences of the modern world socialize or

⁷⁸ Psalm 96; Matthew 28:19-20; Matthew 24:14; Revelation 5:9-10; 7:9ff.

⁷⁹ Acts 1:8.

⁸⁰ Psalm 34:8; Luke 6:43-44

⁸¹ Mark 1:15; Acts 19:4; 20:21; 26:18,20.

⁸² Matthew 28:19-20

enculturate us into the values of freedom, individualism, self-reliance, and self-advancement, so the church is challenged to form a people with distinctive habits of the heart. As an alternative social reality the church is called to teach people how to act, how to fight, how to love, how to see the world, in a peculiar way - a Christlike way.⁸³

The Need for Discipleship: Repentance and Faith

Genuine conversion involves much more than the language of “accepting Christ as my personal Savior” would imply. Conversion should be seen more as a process than a crisis event, as Simon Chan explains: “The typical evangelical understanding of conversion could be pictured as the crossing of a fixed line, an experience sometimes described as ‘crisis conversion.’ (But) conversion is better conceived as a movement toward a center (the Christian faith), but it is a center with a porous rather than fixed boundary. In other words, becoming a Christian means a basic reorientation of life toward the center and a continuing movement into it.” As such, genuine conversion will look like a continual process, over a long period of time, of repentance and faith.

Repentance is the word *metanoia* which means to “rethink” or “to think beyond.” But it unmistakably carries with it the idea of change. To repent is to change. Or better, it is to be remade.⁸⁴ *Faith* is a constant movement toward God in dependence and love. Thus, “(the Christian faith) demands thoroughgoing transformation, thoroughgoing conversion, of every realm of human endeavor, in personal relations, economics, and politics, in homes, culture, and social order. The gospel demands radical discipleship.”⁸⁵

This process of repentance and faith is clearly demonstrated in the life of Abraham (cf. Genesis 12-22). To embrace the call of God Abraham had to depart. He had to leave behind one way of living and its dominating belief-system in order to embrace a whole new set of beliefs, values, and practices. Abraham’s life in Ur of the Chaldeans and Haran was ordered by the values and idols of the dominant culture.⁸⁶ In responding to God’s call Abraham had to repent. He had to turn away from and unlearn one way of thinking, being, and doing in order to faithfully learn the way of faith and obedience. In a sense, he had to die and be born again. One part of his life had to come to an end so that his new life in response to the call of God could begin. Miroslav Volf comments on his repentance, “At the very core of Christian identity lies an all-encompassing change of loyalty... A response to a call from God entails the rearrangements of a whole network of allegiances. Departure is part and parcel of Christian identity.”⁸⁷ Abraham departed. He repented.

But Abraham not only had to depart; he also had to follow God toward the land He had promised him. He had to move out. And as he went, he had to embrace a God-orientation for all of life and to learn the “way of the Lord.”⁸⁸ He was being invited into a relationship with the God who created the heavens and the earth – to be His friend, His partner, His instrument, through which He would bring his blessing and salvation. This required a new set of priorities and practices - a whole new belief system and way of life.

⁸³ *Missional Church*, p. 153.

⁸⁴ WCF XIV and XV. This preserves the Reformed understanding that faith and repentance are graces.

⁸⁵ Lee Camp, *Mere Discipleship* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2003), p. 24.

⁸⁶ Both Ur and Haran were centers of the moon-god cult in that day. It appears likely that the family worshiped the moon god Sin. Both of the daughters – Sarai and Milcah - are probably named after significant figures in the pagan mythology. Abraham’s father, Terah, is very close to the Hebrew word for “moon.” It appears that Abraham and his family are entrenched in the idolatry of their culture.

⁸⁷ Miroslav Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996)

⁸⁸ Genesis 18:19

Defining Discipleship

Tertullian, the ancient Christian leader, is credited as saying, “Christians are not born, they are made.” In other words, genuine conversion requires an intentional process of instruction, practice, and accountability. This is what we mean by discipleship. Discipleship, as we define it, refers to the process of incorporating individuals into the church, God’s “new” people. The ancient church referred to this process as the “catechumenate”⁸⁹ – an extensive period of instruction and examination of new converts in preparation for their baptism and admittance to the Lord’s Supper. The catechumenate was seen as necessary because the new convert was understood to be embarking on a new life. Thus they had to “unlearn” their old way living and learn a new way.

A disciple is a pupil, a student, a learner, an apprentice. Dallas Willard defines a disciple as “someone who has decided to be with another person, under appropriate conditions, in order to become capable of doing what that person does or to become what that person is.”⁹⁰ This is true of any craft or trade. The best way to learn how to play the guitar is to be “discipled” by someone who knows how to play and is committed to teaching you what they’ve learned. The best way to become an effective church-planter is to apprentice yourself to someone who has planted a church and is committed to teaching you the skills and forming in you the character that is necessary for the work.

The HOW-TO of Discipleship

Jesus’ model of discipleship follows this same pattern. Jesus’ ministry gathered a crowd – curious onlookers, Messiah-hunters, and sincere followers. And from that crowd Jesus choose 12 men to be his disciples. Mark records his purpose in choosing the Twelve: “...he appointed twelve so that they might be with him and he might send them out.”⁹¹ Greg Ogden writes, “... what we see in Jesus is a healthy and appropriate skepticism of the masses. ... Jesus ministered to the crowd in order to call people out of it.”⁹²

Programs don’t disciple people. Only people can disciple people. Herb Hodges writes, “Discipling is done by *someone, not by something*. It is done by *persons, not by programs*. It is accomplished by *individuals, not by institutions*. Technically, discipling is one Christian person imparting his whole life to another, by example, leadership, and relationship. It always involves life transference.”⁹³ The Word became flesh. That’s how the gospel came into the world. It was “infleshed.” All effective discipleship happens the same way – it must be “infleshed.” Teaching and instruction (i.e. “word”) is most effectively received, believed, applied, and passed on when it happens within the context of a friendship or relationship (i.e. flesh”). Disciple-making is, by necessity, life-on-life.

Herb Hodges offers the following helpful illustration:

“Suppose you have a person standing behind a line, holding a bucket of water in his hand. Twenty feet beyond the line, there are 20 small-mouth milk bottles. (Preaching, discipleship programs, etc.) is like throwing the water out of the bucket from behind the line, hoping that some of the water enters the bottles. However, the efficiency of such a technique is fairly predictable: not much water will get into the bottles. ... Disciple-making, by comparison, is like taking the bucket of water to each milk bottle and pouring the water into it until the bottle is full. There is little question where the greater efficiency lies.”⁹⁴

⁸⁹ Liturgical Theology, pp. 101-125.

⁹⁰ *Divine Conspiracy*, p. 282.

⁹¹ Mark 3:14

⁹² Greg Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship*, p. 67.

⁹³ Herb Hodges, *Tally Ho the Fox*, p. 70.

⁹⁴ Herb Hodges, *Tally Ho the Fox*, p. 71.

Good parenting finds opportunity for training and instruction in the daily events of life - in the living room, as you walk through the events on the family schedule, during the bedtime routine at night and at the breakfast table in the morning.⁹⁵ This is the way children really learn how to live out their faith. It is the context of the parent-child relationship, in connection with the “curriculum” (i.e. the Scriptures), that makes the instruction effective. You can’t just tell children what they should and shouldn’t do. You have to show them. You have to practice with them. You have to watch them do it and then give them feedback. Why should the moral/theological training of the church be any different?

Robert Coleman captures Jesus’ methodology of disciple-making brilliantly when he writes, “Jesus’ concern was not with programs to reach the multitudes, but with men the multitudes would follow.”⁹⁶ Jesus choose twelve men to carry on his ministry when he was gone. He lived with these men. He pulled them aside after speaking with the crowd to give them further instruction. He gave them assignments and critiqued them. This was his intentional methodology in ministry. He invested in a few in the hope that they would multiply themselves into others.

The pastor of a church has a similar choice to make. The pastor can commit time and resources to the job of making disciples who can do the work of ministry or he can commit time and resources to doing ministry rather than reproducing it. However, the Biblical job description is clear: pastors and teachers are given to the church to equip the saints for ministry.⁹⁷ But how? Paul’s words to the young pastor Timothy are helpful: “what you (*Timothy*) have heard from me (*Paul*) in the presence of many witnesses entrust to *faithful me* who will be able to teach *others* also.”⁹⁸ Paul instructs Timothy to put his life upon a group of men and to reproduce his life and teaching in them so that they, in turn, might reproduce themselves in other. This is the Biblical model for moral and theological training in the church. It is the most effective means of transference. And it creates a multiplication effect that greatly increases the churches ability to faithfully carry out the mission of Jesus: to go into all nations and make disciples!

A Disciple-Making Process

Redeemer’s disciple-making process begins with the *Gospel Course*. This course is a basic introduction to the Gospel (for Christians and non-Christians) and is designed to develop in the participants a Gospel-orientation for all of life.

After completing the Gospel Course, those seeking to join with Redeemer in membership must also complete the *Membership Course*. This course is designed as an introduction to the beliefs, vision, values, and strategies of Redeemer.

Every person who joins with Redeemer in membership is asked to enter into a “discipleship-contract” with another member (preferably in their Community Group or Community Group Zone) who has completed the full discipleship curriculum (see below). This discipleship-contract is an ongoing discipleship relationship between a teacher and a handful of disciples (from 3-5 people). The purpose of the discipleship-contract is two-fold: 1) to read the entire Bible together over a 3-year period (www.joincbr.com); and 2) to work through Redeemer’s discipleship curriculum with the goal that the disciple become a teacher and disciple-maker. The weekly or bi-weekly meetings would include the following: discussion of CBR readings for that week, confession of sin and accountability, prayer, and a teaching from the discipleship curriculum.

And finally, once the Gospel Course, the Membership Course, and the discipleship-curriculum are completed, those being placed in leadership positions on ministry teams (for example,

⁹⁵ Deuteronomy 6:6-9.

⁹⁶ Robert Coleman, *Master Plan of Evangelism*, p. 21.

⁹⁷ Ephesians 4:11ff.

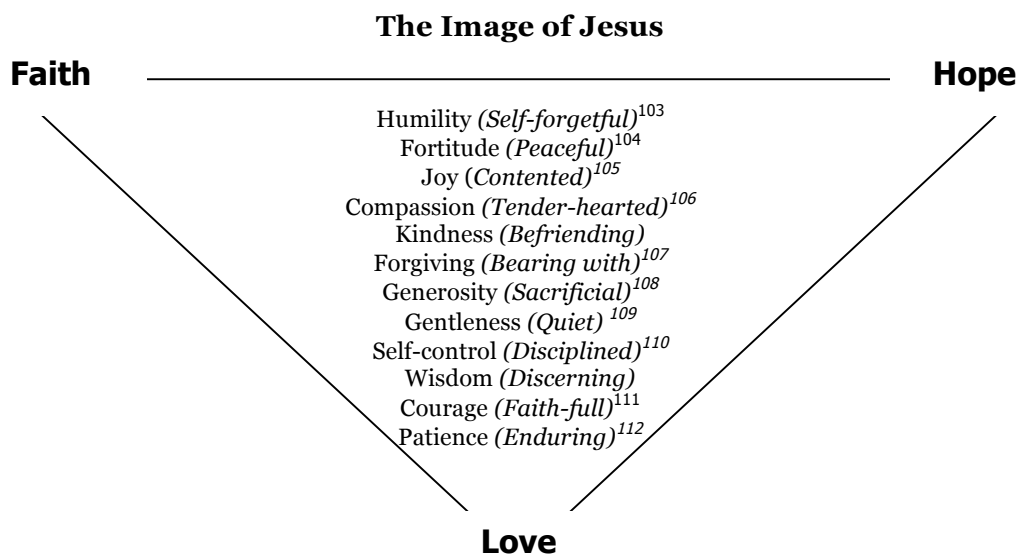
⁹⁸ Herb Hodges, *Fox Fever* (Spiritual Life Ministries, 2006). Hodges notes, “There are four generations of disciples in that one verse.

Community Group leaders) and those pursuing church-office must complete the *Leadership Course*.

Disciple-Making Curriculum

Following Jesus demands nothing less than a radical personal conversion of thought, character, and practice (i.e. knowing, being, and doing). Therefore, Redeemer’s disciple-making curriculum is concerned with each of these: *character* (What do disciples of Jesus look like?), *practice* (What do disciples of Jesus do?), and *thought* (What do disciples of Jesus believe?)

First, *what do disciples of Jesus look like?* In Romans 9, the apostle Paul summarizes the goal of God’s working all things together for our good by saying, “For those he foreknew he also predestined to *be conformed to the image of His Son*, in order that he might become the firstborn among many brothers” (Romans 9:29). God has predestined and is actively working in our lives to make us like Jesus – his image bearers.⁹⁹ 1 Corinthians 13:13 gives us three postures that make up faithful Christian living - faith¹⁰⁰, hope¹⁰¹, and love¹⁰². The chart below illustrates what kind of person faith, hope, and love would produce. This is what we believe a disciple of Jesus looks like. These are the character qualities we measure ourselves against.



⁹⁹ Genesis 1:26-28; 9:6; 1 Corinthians 11:7; Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10 and also 2 Corinthians 3:18.

¹⁰⁰ Mark 11:22; John 6:29; 2 Corinthians 5:7; Galatians 3:11; Ephesians 6:16; Hebrews 11.

¹⁰¹ Psalm 39:7; 69:6; Romans 5:1-4; 8:24; 12:12; 2 Corinthians 1:10; Galatians 5:5; Titus 2:13; 1 Peter 1:3

¹⁰² Matthew 22:37ff.; John 12:34; 14:15; 15:17; 1 Corinthians 13; 2 Corinthians 5:14; Galatians 5:6; Ephesians 5:2; 1 John 3:10-11, 14, 18; 4:7-9; 4:16-21.

¹⁰³ Philippians 2:3-11; John 13:1ff.; Matt. 20:26-28; Luke 22:24-27; John 5:19; John 5:30; John 6:38; John 8:28-29; Colossians 3:12; Ephesians 4:2; 1 Peter 5:5-6.

¹⁰⁴ The phrase “Do not let your hearts be troubled” (John 14:1, 27; cf. 1 Peter 3:14-15; 2 Corinthians 4:1, 16) captures the essence of what we mean by this word. The word “peace” also captures its essence (John 14:27; 20:19, 21; cf. Isaiah 26:3; Romans 5:1; 8:6; Galatians 5:22; Ephesians 6:15; Philippians 4:7; Colossians 3:15.

¹⁰⁵ Nehemiah 8:11; Psalm 51:12; 126:5-6; Isaiah 61:3; Galatians 5:22. For contentment see Philippians 4:11; Hebrews 13:5; 1 Timothy 6:6.

¹⁰⁶ Mt. 9:36; Mk. 8:2; Lk. 7:13; Col. 3:12.

¹⁰⁷ By this we mean forgiving where there is sin (Luke 6:37; Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:13) and also “covering” or “bearing with” (Colossians 3:13; 1 Corinthians 13:7).

¹⁰⁸ Deuteronomy 14:28-29; 15:1-11; Luke 6:30, 35-36; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Philippians 2:3-4; 1 Tim 6:18

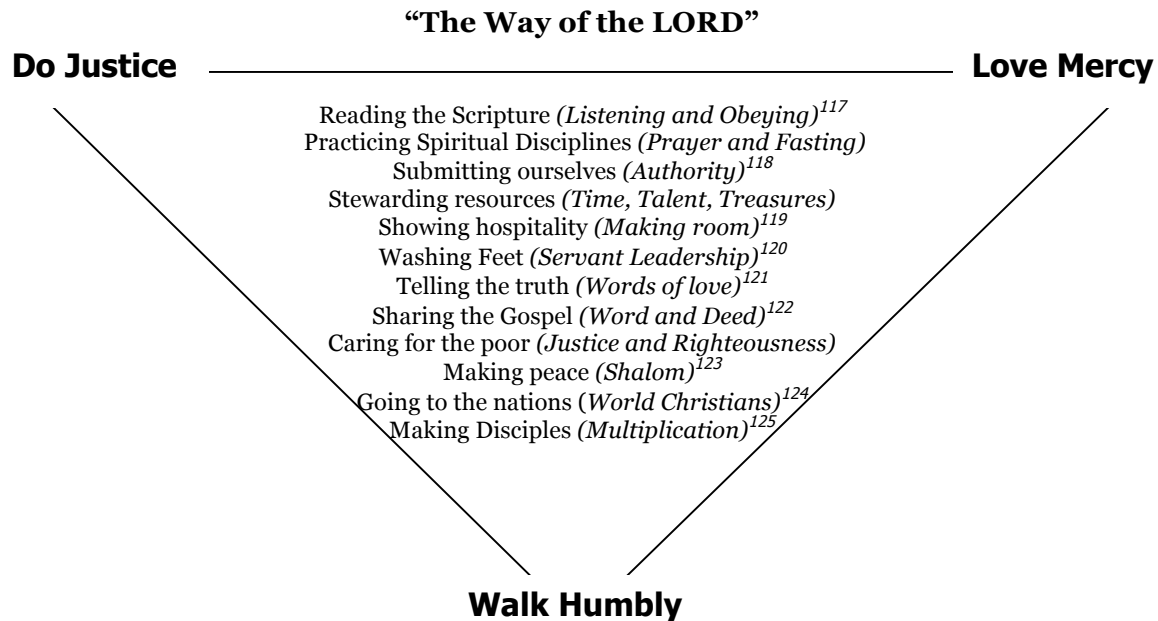
¹⁰⁹ 2 Corinthians 10:1; Galatians 5:3; Ephesians 4:2; Colossians 3:12; 1 Timothy 6:11; 1 Peter 3:4.

¹¹⁰ Proverbs 16:32; 25:28; 1 Corinthians 9:24-27; Galatians 5:23; 1 Timothy 2:9; 2:15; 2 Timothy 1:7; 3:3; Titus 1:8; 2:2-6,12; contrast with Matthew 23:25 and 1 Timothy 5:16

¹¹¹ Joshua 1:6-9,18; Proverbs 28:1.

¹¹² Galatians 5:22; Ephesians 4:2; 1 Corinthians 13:4; 1 Thessalonians 5:14.

Second, *what do disciples of Jesus do?* What *competencies* must they develop as they follow Him? The early Christian church was called “The Way” because Jesus had initiated them into an alternate way of life – God’s life, the “way of the Lord.”¹¹³ Micah 6:8 sums up what we mean by this phrase: “He has told you, O an, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice (*misphat*)¹¹⁴, and to love kindness (*hesed*), and to walk humbly¹¹⁵ with your God.”¹¹⁶ The chart below illustrates what a life of doing justice, loving kindness, and walking in humility would look like. These are the things we believe disciples of Jesus do. They are the competencies and practices we measure ourselves against.



¹¹³ Matthew 22:16; Luke 20:21; Acts 13:10; Acts 18:26; cf. Genesis 18:19; Psalm 27:11.

¹¹⁴ Genesis 18:19; Psalm 33:5; Psalm 37:28; Psalm 72; Psalm 89:4; Isaiah 1:17; Isaiah 9:7; Isaiah 11:4; Isaiah 61:8; Amos 5:24; Matthew 6:33; Matthew 23:23.

¹¹⁵ Job 5:11; 22:29; Matthew 11:28-29; Matthew 5:3; Luke 14:7-11; James 1:9; 4:4-6; 1 Peter 5:5-6.

¹¹⁶ There is a parallel statement in Hosea 12:6 and also in Zephaniah 2:3.

¹¹⁷ Joshua 1:8; Psalm 1:1-3; 1 Timothy 4:13.

¹¹⁸ Luke 2:5; James 4:7; Hebrews 12:9; Romans 13:1; Ephesians 5:22,24; Colossians 3:18; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 5:5

¹¹⁹ Romans 15:7; Romans 12:13; Hebrews 13:2; 1 Peter 4:9.

¹²⁰ John 13:1ff.; Phillippians 2:5-7; Matthew 20:25-28; Mark 10:42-45; Luke 22:24-27; 1 Peter 4:10; 5:1-3.

¹²¹ Ephesians 4:15, 25; 1 John 3:18; 1 Corinthians 13:6. Jesus models loving people by speaking the truth in love throughout his ministry. See, for example: Mark 11:17ff. and Luke 14:7ff.

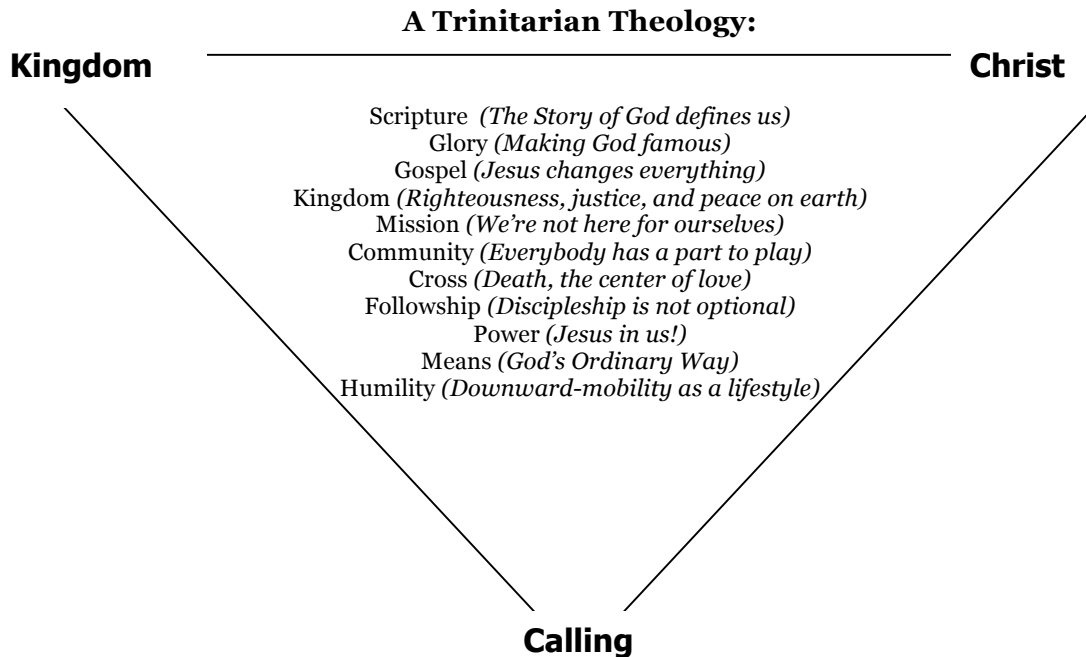
¹²² This is evangelism.

¹²³ Matthew 5:9; James 3:18; cf. Isaiah 9:7. The Old Testament word for peace is shalom and carries with it the reweaving of the fabric of creation into the harmony it was created to reflect. This reflects a concern that goes beyond the mere cessation of war. So, for example: Isaiah 11:6-9; Isaiah 65:25. It also requires caring for the environment (cf. Genesis 2:15).

¹²⁴ Matthew 24:14; Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47; Acts 1:8. Jesus command to his disciples to go into all the nations fulfills the Old Testament expectation (see Genesis 12:1-3; 18:18; 22:18; 26:4; 28:14; Psalm 67; Psalm 96; Isaiah 2:2-3; 42:6; 49:6) and also anticipates the vision John’s Revelation offers of every tribe, tongue, and nation gathered around the throne in worship (see Revelation 5:9; 7:9; also 14:6).

¹²⁵ Matthew 28:19-20; 2 Timothy 2:2; Titus 2:3-5; cf. Deuteronomy 6:6-9 for parenting as an example of disciple-making.

And finally, *what do disciples of Jesus believe?* What *convictions* and values drive them as the follow Him? The chart below illustrates a “Trinitarian theology.” These are the core convictions and beliefs we must possess in order to be and do what we are called to.



Strategy #5: CHURCH-PLANTING
Making Jesus' invisible kingdom visible through a
Gospel Movement

Tim Keller writes, “Virtually all the great evangelistic challenges of the New Testament are basically calls to plant churches not simply to share the faith.”¹²⁶ Jesus left his disciples with the following instructions: “Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19). Included in that commission is a necessary reference to the local church.¹²⁷ The call to “make disciples” and to “baptize” involve incorporating new converts into a worshipping community with accountability and boundaries. According to the historical understanding of the place of the church in the mission of God,¹²⁸

¹²⁶ Tim Keller, *Redeemer Church Planting Center: Church Planter Manual*, p. 27.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

¹²⁸ The Reformers believed an individual Christian’s relationship to the church to be “necessary” to salvation. They were found of saying “You cannot have the God for your father without having the church as your mother.” To which John Calvin writes, “For there is no other way to enter into life unless this mother conceive us in her womb, give us birth, nourish us at her breast, and lastly, unless she keep us under her care and guidance... Our weakness does not allow us to be dismissed from her school until we have been pupils all our lives. Away from her bosom one cannot hope for any forgiveness of sins or any salvation

planting new churches is the only way to make sure we are creating permanent new Christians.

The NEED for Church Planting

This is our core belief: the continual planting of new congregations is the single most important strategy for #1- the numerical growth of the church in a city; and #2- the continual corporate renewal of the existing churches in a city.¹²⁹ The research proves this.

Therefore, we put forth four reasons why every church should have a strategy for church planting. First, to be faithful to the Great Commission (see above). Second, new churches best reach the unchurched. The average new church gains most of its new members (60-80%) from the unchurched population of a city. Churches over 10 years old gain their new members (80-90%) from other churches and denominations.¹³⁰ Third, new churches are proven to be the best method for reaching new generations, new residents, and new people groups. C. Peter Wagner has said, “Planting new churches is the most effective evangelistic methodology known under heaven.” And finally, the gospel necessarily creates a people who long to give themselves away. Church planting creates the necessary “missional ethos” to inspire the generosity and sacrifice that are an appropriate response to the gospel of grace. Without a commitment to church planting a church begins to exist only for itself and that is not

The GOAL for Church Planting

The following is our working goal: a church for every 10,000 people and 50% of the churches in our city younger than 15 years old. According to research, this is a formula for Gospel transformation in a city.

Our CORE VALUES

These are the things that motivate us:

The Story	(We are <i>defined</i> by the Story and read it together in community.)
Glory	(Making God famous)
Gospel	(Jesus changes everything.)
Kingdom	(Righteousness, justice, and peace on the earth)
Power	(Jesus in us!)
Means	(Committed to God’s ordinary way)
Movement	(The Gospel continually breaks out!)

¹²⁹ Tim Keller, *Redeemer Church Planting Center: Church Planter Manual*.

¹³⁰ Lyle Schaller, quoted in D. McGavran and G. Hunter, *Church Growth* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1980), p. 100. See also C. Kirk Hadaway, *New Churches and Church Growth in the Southern Baptist Convention* (Nashville: Broadman, 1987).

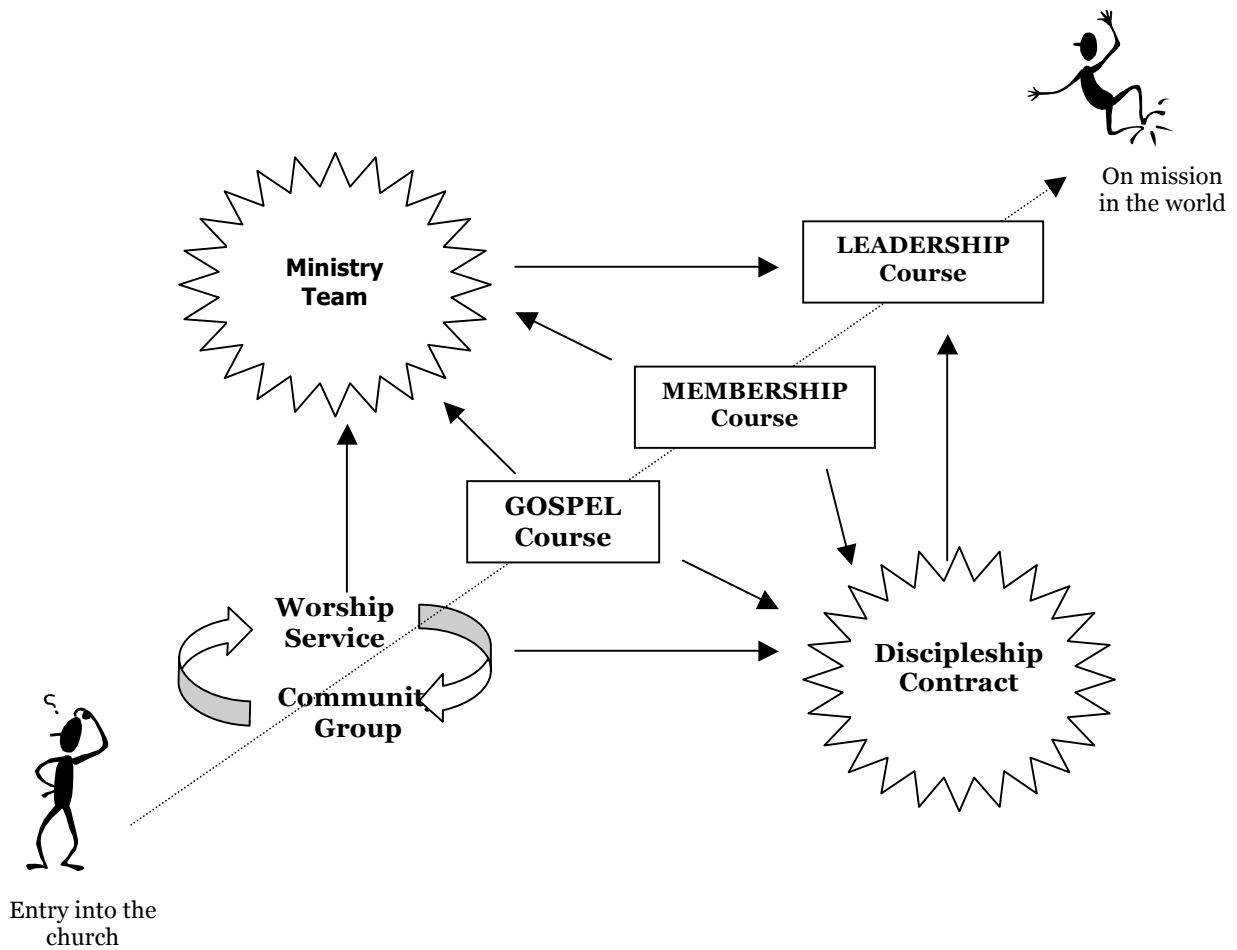
Our CORPORATE VALUES

These are the things we hope to be known for:

- Community (Everybody has a part to play)
- Diversity (The many made one!)
- Mission (We are not here for ourselves but for something bigger.)
- Followship (Christians are not born; they are made. Discipleship is not optional.)
- Repentance (Repentance is change!)
- Humility (Downward-mobility as a lifestyle)
- Suffering (The beautiful irony of a life-producing Death)

Our MINISTRY FLOWCHART:

This is HOW it works:



Appendix A – Spiritual Inventory Assessment (Christian Practice)

Reading the Scripture (*Listening and Obeying*):

- Are you participating in CBR or some other Scripture reading strategy?
- Is your family reading the Scriptures together?
- What passages/verses of Scripture did you memorize this past year?

Practicing Spiritual Disciplines (*Prayer and Fasting*):

- Do you have a disciplined approach to prayer? If so, describe it.
- What prayers have you seen answered this year?
- What other spiritual disciplines are you making a part of your discipleship to Jesus?

Submitting to one another (*Authority*):

- How is God developing in you a willingness to submit?
- Describe one situation in which you were forced to do something you didn't want to do. What did it feel like?
- In which relationship is it hardest for you to embrace submission? Where have you seen growth in that relationship in the past year?

Stewarding our Resources (*Time, Talent, Treasures*)

- What percentage of your income did you give to the cause of Jesus' kingdom this year? (Is this more or less than last year?)
- Reflect on the business of your schedule – are there any activities/commitments that you need to unplug from to free up more time?
- What other gifts and resources do you have that could be used to make Jesus' invisible kingdom visible in our city and the world?

Showing Hospitality (*Receiving One Another*):

- How is your Community Group going? How faithful was your participation in Community Group this year?
- Are you befriending/building a relationship with someone who is hard to love?

Washing Feet (*Servant Leadership*):

- Men, describe your faithfulness in being a servant leader to your: wife?... children? ... younger men... employees? Tell one story about how you “washed feet” this year.
- Women, describe your faithfulness in being a servant leader to your: children?... employees? ... younger women? Tell one story about how you “washed feet” this year.

Telling the Truth (*Words of Love*):

- Connect your security in the gospel with a willingness to risk other's disapproval by speaking the truth. How are you growing in “gospel dynamics”?
- Describe a situation where you confronted someone and called them to repentance.
- Describe a situation where you were confronted by someone and called to repentance. How did you respond?

Sharing the Gospel (*Word and Deed*):

- Who did you share the gospel with this year?

- Who did you lead to Christ this year?
- What mission pathway is your Community Group participating in? What projects did you participate in this year?

Caring for the Poor (Justice and Righteousness):

- How are you educating yourself about the economic and social needs in our city and world?
- Is your life intersecting more and more with the poor and the needy? If not, what strategies might you employ this next year to accomplish this?
- What activities did you participate in this past year to care for the poor?
- How are you praying for the poor and the needy in our city and the world?

Making peace (Shalom):

-

Going to the nations (World Christians):

- What international mission pathway is your Community Group participating in?
- Did you take an international mission trip this year? If not, are you planning on going on a trip in the next 3 years?
- How are you praying for the nations? What strategies are you using?

Making Disciples (Multiplication):

- Are you in a discipleship group? If so, how is it going?
- Think through your life. Which relationships are likely candidates for you to disciple in the future?