

MISSION STATEMENT FOR CHRIST COVENANT CHURCH

One extremely important question any group of people should ask of themselves, both initially and repeatedly, is – “Why do we exist?” Or, asked another way, it might sound something like the following - “What is it that we are to care about, and thus, be deeply committed to?” Asking this question is important for all organizations, and especially for the church. For most other organizations the answer is usually the result of men and women gathering to figure out their Mission Statement for themselves. In other words, the answers come from below or from within i.e., humanity. For the church, however, the answer(s) are found from above, i.e., they are made known to us in Scripture.

The sad plight of so many institutions is that they have lost their way. That is to say, they forget their mission. This is commonly known as missional drift. What is inexpressibly tragic is for the church to lose her way! This often happens to a local church for a variety of reasons: 1) Leaders intentionally or inadvertently replace a biblical vision with a man-made one, 2) Congregations forget their original, biblical mandate, 3) Leaders and congregations become distracted by culturally, competing interests, 4) Leaders and congregations fail to renew their consecration to Christ and his calling on their individual and collective lives, 5) Leaders and congregations fail to address new ideas and new opportunities in light of their mission statement, thus diverted away from their original mandate.

The Elders of CCC spent the better part of the past year in prayer, biblical study, research and conversation working towards answering that question(s). “Why does CCC exist?” Or – “What is it that CCC should care about and be deeply committed to?” The following, in an attempt to summarize the answers we find in Scripture, is our heartfelt answer(s) to this most pressing question. These are the truths that we are called to by our King and Redeemer, and thus, by necessity, consecrated to by duty and delight. What follows are the details that undergird our new, extremely brief Mission Statement.

First, CCC exists to worship God the Father, through Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit. Even a cursory glance at Scripture reveals that worshipping him in spirit and truth is the clarion call of God on a believer’s life. Both the Old and New Testament testify that this is our highest privilege and priority. From Adam and Eve’s placement in the garden (i.e., to worship and guard), to Israel’s deliverance from Egypt (i.e., worship me at this mountain), to Isaiah’s encounter with God in the temple (the triplex holy, holy, holy), to Nicodemus’ encounter with Christ (i.e., God is looking for worshippers), to the depiction of the Saints in Revelation (i.e., saints gathered around the throne singing), the picture is always focusing on the creature’s adoration and exaltation of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Second, CCC exists to love and serve one another as a church family. Inextricably related to the greatest commandment to love God with all our hearts, souls, and minds (i.e., worship) the commandment is to love our neighbor as ourselves. That is to say, part and parcel to the first command to love God, is the corollary to love one another. We can distinguish these two, but we

cannot separate them. Hence, to love God entails a love for his people, the church. A healthy reading of Scripture quickly reveals that God's overarching promise in Creation and Redemption is having a people for himself. This called-out group of people is known as the church. Examining the metaphors given in scripture one rapidly discovers the primacy God places on what is otherwise referenced as his bride, his army, his house, his temple, etc. Therefore, his call to each and every one of his disciples is to be a churchman. In short, to love Christ entails a love for his people. This is not merely a hypothetical love for a universal church, but a concrete call to love people through sacrifice and service in the local church; hence, all the "one anothers" in the New Testament.

Third, CCC exists to make disciples of all those who profess faith in Christ. It is a common mistake to interpret the Great Commission as if it is merely saying "go evangelize the world" or something like that. Rather, what is explicit in the commission is the imperative to "make disciples." Certainly, evangelism is implied in that one cannot disciple another unless he or she is first converted to Christ. Everywhere in Scripture it is evident that Jesus and Paul and Peter recognize discipleship as a priority. Many have cogently argued that discipleship is God's method for multiplication. For example, in 2 Timothy 2:2, Paul exhorts the reader, "...what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also..." Notice! There are four generations in that one verse: 1) Paul, 2) Timothy, 3) faithful men, 4) others. This truth of men investing into other men and women investing in other women is written large across the pages of the Bible. Another example of this important truth is captured in the language of Ephesians. Paul, writing to this relatively new group of churches, says, "...he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, *to equip the saints for the work of ministry*, for building up the body of Christ..." (Emphasis added- Ephesians 4:11-14). Paul is telling the leaders that their focus, among others, is to equip men and women for their callings. CCC is committed to making disciples.

Fourth, CCC is unalterably committed to the proclamation of the Gospel. Preaching the gospel to those who are not yet converted is an unassailable truth and, thus, a demand placed on the church by God. Paul encapsulates this obligation wonderfully when he says, "How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? *And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!'*" - (emphasis added, Romans 10:14-15). Elsewhere, Paul would go so far as to say regarding himself, "For if I preach the gospel, that gives me no ground for boasting. For necessity is laid upon me. *Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel.*" (emphasis added, 1 Corinthians 9:16). Peter would write, in the most eloquent way, "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, *that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.*" (emphasis added, 1 Peter 2:9). So, whether it's Peter or Paul, we are instructed that the *raison d'être* of the people of God is the proclamation of his excellencies to all who would hear. CCC desires earnestly to listen to Paul when he writes, "Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving. At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, *to declare the mystery of Christ*, on account of which I am in prison, that I may make it clear, which is how I ought to speak. Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person" (emphasis added,

Colossians 4:1-6). May we, like Paul, pray for open doors, declare the mysteries, make it clear, walk in wisdom toward outsiders, make the best use of our time, let our speech always be gracious, and know how to answer each person!

Fifthly, CCC exists to plant other churches. It is true that much more could and, perhaps, should be said. However, our goal is to articulate those primary callings laid upon a local church by the Great Shepherd of the sheep. Any study of scripture will readily reveal that a New Testament Church was eager to advance his kingdom through gospel proclamation and the making of disciples. A momentary glance at, for instance, Paul's life will clearly point out that he would preach, make disciples, raise up Elders, and build churches. He would then move on to where the gospel was not yet proclaimed or a church did not yet exist. His commitment was radical. He would stay in an area until he had built a church on patterns found in Scripture, then move on. This, tragically, has been lost by more than a few generations of churches. What was commonplace in most Baptist churches from their earliest inception, for example, were local congregations planting other congregations in their regions and the world. CCC desires to obey Christ in the replication of many churches until Christ returns in glory.

Finally, believe it or not, we've tried to summarize that in the following Vision Statement: **CCC exists to glorify God by exalting Christ, equipping the saints, and evangelizing the world.**