

## **The Village Church Core Values**

### **1. Above all, we will value God as our treasure.**

Matthew 13:44-46 records the parable in which Jesus likened life with God to finding treasure. God is the ultimate being, has the ultimate worth, and so is ultimately worth knowing. Jesus died to bring us to God (1 Peter 3:18). The good news of the Christian Gospel is that we can be reconciled to God by his grace through faith in Jesus Christ (Colossians 1:21-22).

The Gospel is all about God – God in our lives as God is supposed to be in our lives today and forever. So, The Village Church we plant will treasure God, celebrate God, worship God, live with joy in God, and serve God with passion by God's strength.

As noted below, the new church will express great concern for people inside and outside the family of faith, but those concerns will be driven by, shaped by and fueled by how we value God as our greatest treasure. We will be a God driven, prayer fueled community escorting people to center their lives in Jesus.

### **2. We will value prayer as an expression of absolute dependence on God for all we do.**

In the first days of the first church plant the leaders were arrested and warned by the very men that had Jesus killed to not preach in the name of Jesus ever again (Acts 4). Upon their release that brand new church gathered and prayed to their Sovereign, unchallengeable God. They praised him for his unstoppable workings for his glory in Jesus through all of history. They laid their concerns before him and asked him to stretch out his hand and do a mighty work. That story ends with this line, "After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly." (Acts 4:31)

Our gatherings, from the launch team phase forward, will have that kind of praying as their central component. We will ask God and trust God to do what only he can do: give life to dead people as his Gospel is boldly spoken in homes, neighborhoods and the marketplace. We will intercede for the salvation of the specific people God has placed in the lives of those who make up the new church. We will ask Jesus to do in us what he has promised to do as we follow him: make us fishers of men (Matthew 4:19).

### **3. We will value those who have yet to discover God as their treasure.**

Lost people matter to God. Jesus said he came to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10). Jesus sent his followers into the world as he was sent (John 17:18). We are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us for people to be reconciled to God (2 Corinthians 5:20). Our church will be a seeking church. We will seek God's power and God's passion as we seek out individuals and families to authentically befriend, love and serve while we proclaim and teach the truth of the Gospel to them. Our ministries and activities will be shaped by the value of connecting with un-churched people in such a way as to escort them to their own discovery of God as treasure. We will value un-churched people so much that we will, in love, both warn about God's judgment and condemnation of sin and extend invitations to be reconciled to God by the blood of Jesus' cross. We will value un-churched people so much that we will sacrificially demonstrate God's love for them as we continually and intentionally serve them in practical ways.

### **4. We will value God empowered teaching of God's truth (the Bible) as the primary means for people to connect with Jesus and discover God as their treasure.**

Our God is the God who has taken the initiative and made himself known. He communicates and truth is known. He speaks and life happens. God's word is powerful and profitable (2 Timothy 3:16). Jesus told us to live by every word that comes from God (Matthew 4:4).

Church planting began in the proclamation of the Gospel. Churches and Christ followers grow as the Gospel is taught. Certainly timeless truths need to be communicated in ways sensitive to the times, but we know that God's word empowered by God's Spirit transcends all cultural barriers. God's word, proclaimed in a systematic and expository manner, in dependence upon God's Spirit to move in people's hearts, will bear fruit to God's glory. "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?" (Romans 10:13).

### **5. We will value the invitations friends give to friends to connect with Jesus and discover the treasure God is.**

Jesus told Philip to follow him. Philip quickly found Nathanael, who quickly found faith in Jesus. (John 1). Jesus told Matthew to follow him. Matthew threw a party so his friends and acquaintances could meet Jesus (Matthew 9). Jesus met a woman at a well who rushed back to her neighborhood to tell them about Jesus (John 4). Jesus freed a man from deep spiritual bondage and sent him home to tell his friends what had happened in his life. The man toured ten cities proclaiming how much Jesus had done for him, and everyone marveled (Mark 5). Inviting others to meet the Jesus we know has been part of the Gospel method from the first days of this Gospel movement.

This new church will equip each Christ follower with prayer, coaching, teaming and teaching to escort people to the point where God will give them faith in Jesus and the life with God Jesus died to win for them. Our 'church growth' strategy will be highly relational and dependent upon Jesus making us bold witnesses to him. Our structures and ministries will serve a prayer based, God dependent, invitation strategy.

**6. We will continually frame our life with values, motives, strategies, and systems that reinforce that the church is for those who are not yet among its members.**

Jesus commissioned his church to be a witness to him and to make disciples. The goals and objectives of every ministry or team of the church will include the priority of teaching or preaching the Gospel to un-churched or not yet believing people.

**7. We will value investing for excellence in service in everyone who makes the church their spiritual home.**

The church has been described as the blood bought people of God (Acts 20:28). Each Christ follower has been gifted by God's Spirit for significant ministry among God's people (1 Corinthians 12:7). God's people are treasures and masterpieces of grace who deserve respect, thanks, encouragement, coaching, training and equipping in their service of the Gospel. Because of our God's value we will both value all service done in his name and for his glory and strive for excellence in that service. We will do our work for the Lord, to please him in every way (Colossians 1:10; 3:23).

**8. We will value sacrifice and service, with joy, because discovering God is finding the life we have always dreamed about.**

Jesus, God the Son, served lost people at greater cost than we could imagine (Philippians 2). His humiliation is astonishing when put alongside his glory. Jesus said that the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:45). For the joy set before him he served, even to the cross (Hebrews 12:2).

Jesus gives life to the full (John 10:10). The fruit of his Spirit is joy (Galatians 5:22). There is joy in our salvation (Psalm 51:12) and strength in the joy of the Lord (Nehemiah 8:10). With Jesus as our model and our source how could we live any other way than joy filled, sacrificial service?

**9. We will value strategic mission partnerships both within and beyond our immediate area.**

The commission we have been given is to go throughout the world making disciples (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8). No Christ follower and no local church can live in obedience to that commission apart from partnerships for the Gospel in places where they do not now live and work. No Christ follower can live in obedience to that commission and be concerned only for their local Gospel efforts. The image of every tribe and tongue giving praise to Jesus ought to inspire great efforts to that end (Revelation 7:9). Ours is a global mission.

**10. We will value the reproduction of churches through 'daughter' and/or satellite (multi-site or video venue) churches.**

We wholeheartedly endorse the GLBC goal of planting lots of churches and are thrilled to partner with our sister churches in the St. Croix Valley LEAD team to plant churches that are Reformed in theological conviction. We will pray, give people, and give money as the needs arise, even at cost, sacrifice or risk to our own ministries (Mark 8:35). We will plant churches!!