

## Living the Mission

Laurie Beth Jones, Author of *Jesus, CEO*, writes, "My uncle once told me that during World War II if an unidentified soldier appeared suddenly in the dark and could not state his mission, he was automatically shot without question. I wonder what would happen if we reinstated that policy today."

Her uncle's is a startling story - and her question is an uncomfortable one!

The mission of Good Shepherd is to **Invite all people into a Christ-centered life in God's family**. This is not merely a mission "statement" - something that looks nice on stationary or in lettering on the wall. Rather, it defines what we are called to do. It is our guiding North Star, providing direction and pointing us forward. Our mission answers the question, "*What are we doing?*"

Our mission is inspired by our values, the shared motives that undergird everyday ministry. If our mission answers the question "*What?*" then our values answer the question "*Why are we doing it?*"

Simon Sinek, author of *Start With Why*, puts it this way: "People don't buy what you do; they buy why you do it. And what you do simply proves what you believe." While we would use a different term than "buy" at Good Shepherd, this truth translates. We need to live the title of Sinek's book. We need to "start with why"! Good Shepherd's values, our motives - our *why's* - are:

**Intergenerational Family**

**Biblical Discipleship**

**Authentic Evangelism**

You can see how closely these values tie into our mission statement! They inspire us to invite all people into a Christ-centered life in God's family!

Now, mission and values are common place, but they are not enough. What else is needed!? The *how!* And yet, it's been written that 98 percent of churches in North America lack any sort of strategy of *how* they will live out a mission inspired by their values.

Again, if mission answers "*What?*" and values answer "*Why?*", then strategy answers the question "*How are we doing it?*"

We are inviting all people into a Christ-centered life in God's family through four rhythms of ministry and mission:



**Planting** the gospel in our networks and neighborhoods



**Deepening** our faith in weekly worship



**Flourishing** in communal study with others



**Nurturing** others' spiritual, emotional, and physical needs

This map is best represented cyclically:



This cyclical representation of our strategy reveals how each activity should lead into the next. Our efforts in **planting** the gospel in our networks and neighborhoods beckons us to **deepen** our faith in weekly worship. From there we are drawn into covenantal community where our whole lives **flourish**. And when we experience the richness than only genuine companionship brings, we **nurture** others in response. What's more, caring for others brings opportunities to share the good news. Research reveals that caring for others is one of the best ways to till the soil for planting the gospel!

Further, this cyclical representation of our strategy shows how every step can be an entry point into ministry and mission. In other words, *planting, deepening, flourishing* and *nurturing* all play an integral role in **inviting all people to grow into a Christ-centered life in God's family.**

## Looking Ahead

So we've got answers to our "What?", to our "Why?", and to our "How?" But we're not done yet. Two vital questions remain: "When?" and "Where?"

Within the next **90 days**, Staff and Session will develop an answer the question, "**When are we successful?**" As in business ventures, churches often fall back on counting "nickels and noses" (how much is given and how many people attend) or the "ABCs" (attendance, buildings, and cash). Those measures do reveal one aspect of success in ministry, and throughout the past year, both our giving and membership has increased. We give thanks to God for gathering his

people unto Him and prompting His people to give generously.

While these measures can tell us about one aspect of our ministry, a deeper, more thorough answer to "**When?**" is needed, which measures not only the *input* (attendance) or *output* (giving), but the *impact* (transformation to Christ-likeness). To ask it another way, "What are the attributes or characteristics in the life of the individual that reflect the accomplishment of the mission?"

To state the obvious: Our mission is *not* to "invite all people to worship with God's family" or to "invite all people to give to God's family." Those things are good, but **inviting all people to grow into a Christ-centered life in God's family** begs the question, "When will we know we've hit the bullseye?"

Then, within the next **6 months**, Staff and Session will develop an answer to another question: "**Where are we going?**" This starts with painting a picture of God's dream for Good Shepherd. After discerning God's best future for us, this strategic plan will detail four stages:

### **Beyond the Horizon** vision

(a vivid narrative for inspiring people that envisions where we're going in the next 5-20 years)

### **Background** vision

(qualitative and strategic ideas that clarify 4 strategic emphases over the next 3 years)

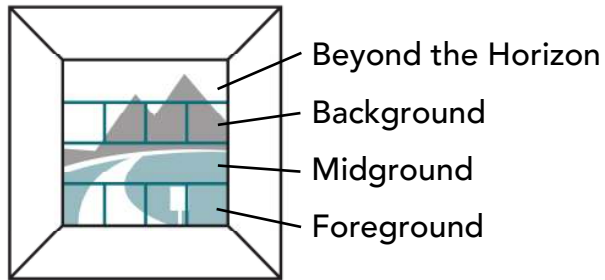
### **Midground** vision

(1 qualitative and quantitative, both inspiring and measurable goal for the whole church over the next year)

### **Foreground** vision

(4 specific initiatives that support the midground vision)

Then, these two - God's picture and our plans - will overlap:



## In the Meantime

While Staff and Session develop this long-term Strategic Plan clarifying where we are going in 5-20 years, there are a number of strategic emphases we need to work toward *in the meantime*.

These emphases could be divided in three categories: **Passing the Baton**, **We Before Me**, and **Getting Our House in Order**. Each of these categories - and the emphases themselves - are central to inviting all people into a Christ-centered life in God's family.

### Passing the Baton

- **Leadership Development**  
In the next **6 months**, we will create an introductory Leadership Development process which *reveals God's process of developing leaders and prepares Covenant Partners for greater impact* on campus, in our community, and around the world
- **Spiritual Leadership**  
Through the **next year**, we will improve the emphasis on spiritual development for all in leadership

### We Before Me

- **Children: 2 Deep**  
In the next **9 months**, we will double the number of Children's Teachers *from 1 to 2* in each learning

environment (both Sunday mornings and Wednesday nights) for spiritual guidance, supervision and safety

- **Students: 5 to 1**  
In the next **9 months**, we will change the scorecard of Youth Ministry, creating teams of adults that are invested in the lives of students *by a ratio of 5:1*
- **Strengthen Modern Gathering**  
In the next **6 months**, we will *strengthen our commitment* to our 10:45am worship gathering, through attendance and willing service

### Getting Our House in Order

- **Returning to the Neighborhood**  
In the **next year**, we will continue to be *trained in hospitality and service*, as we seek to plant the gospel in our networks and neighborhoods
- **Finalizing Policies and Procedures**  
In the **next year**, we will finalize development of our *Administrative Policies, Procedures, and Practices* manual
- **Developing Alignment**  
In the **next year**, we will develop an alignment process through which *every ministry and mission* of Good Shepherd can be aligned within our mission
- **Developing Assimilation Plan**  
In the **9 months**, we will develop an assimilation plan that *effectively invites* both guests and Covenant Partners *into a Christ-centered life in God's family*
- **Facility**  
In the **next 3 years**, we will analyze our current facility and discern how to prepare it for future use