

# **A Broader Description of the Mission and Vision of Our Savior's @ McCall Discipleship Strategy, Core Values, and Commitment to a Lifestyle of Kingdom Living**

## **Vision – Our Preferred Future**

The Vision of this Discipleship Strategy is to build a movement of like-minded followers of Jesus for the purpose of actualizing the Great Commission of God (Matthew 28:16ff).

The Vision is simple – we venture in a discipleship partnership with God to take the Great Commission of Jesus seriously in a creative manner. In a consensual partnership as followers of Jesus, we commit to building the Kingdom of God through the intentional building of redemptive discipling relationships wherever the Holy Spirit may lead.

## **Mission – What we do**

Our mission is to make disciples of all nations – to love God, love others and live for Jesus. Our mission is evangelizing the lost and unchurched, making disciples intentionally, teaching all to faithfully respond to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, and building up people of faith so that each is exercising their giftedness in the context of loving, supportive, and challenging community.

This strategy defines a community in accordance with what Jesus taught regarding His presence experienced in the context of relationships – “For where two or three have gathered together in My name, I am there in their midst (Matthew 18:20).” Communities are not understood as some sort of group process, formula or program but rather a dynamic relationship involving individuals and the presence of the Holy Spirit.

The Kingdom of God is much greater than any one church. Christ-followers are called to be more committed to seeing the Kingdom extended than they are about individual church growth. Instead of being the biggest church in the area, the desire of this proposal is to church the area. All healthy organisms reproduce. It is in their DNA to look beyond themselves to the next generation or the species dies. Healthy churches strive for multiplication on every level – disciples and churches. As Jesus Himself stated, “Make disciples to the ends of the earth.” (Matthew 28:19-20).

Our Savior's @ McCall prays and seeks life in the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God is what Jesus preached, lived and taught...the Kingdom is the reign and "reach" of God's rule. Jesus called His followers to the Kingdom (Luke 4) and to live "the Way of the Kingdom (Matthew 5-7), in other words, to experience the Kingdom's reign in our lives as well as live it out in our relationships and lifestyle. Jesus' call was and is comprehensive in that God wants to reign as Lord in every area of our lives. His Kingdom not only redeems and saves but subverts the powers of evil and opens up to us a new kind of life - a new creation, through his resurrection; a new life orientation through the cross and a ministry of reconciliation/grace/mercy; as well as a new emphasis on the radical power-down nature of Kingdom living and on the priority of relationship, love, forgiveness, and acceptance of others through the power of the Spirit. We pray together, “Thy Kingdom come.” We are seeking all of who God is to touch and move in and through our lives and to make itself known in every aspect of who we are. Experiencing the Kingdom of God is not only a Jesus follower's future inheritance but it is a faith community's passion for daily living.

## **Philosophy – Why we do it**

As Alan Hirsch states, “*apostolic genius lies latent in all of God's people – we have simply forgotten how to access it*”. “*A missional church is one whose primary commitment is to the missionary calling of the people of God . . . it is one that aligns itself with God's missionary purposes in the world . . .*”

*The missional church is a sent church with one of its defining values [incarnating Jesus' life and values in the culture it is embedded]". (Frost and Hirsch, The Shaping of Things to Come, p.229)*

The DNA of growth and fulfilling the great commission lies in the heart/life of every follower of Jesus. That fabric can propel the church far into the 21st century.

We have become aware that we are lost in a perplexing global jungle of worldviews and lifestyles that are confounding the most learned and experienced of theologians and church practitioners.

We adhere to the belief that God works through His people. To be a follower of Jesus is to understand that mission is the heartbeat of God. That understanding is lived out as a personal and communal attribute and through a passionate willingness to participate with Him in what He is doing in the world. We believe that God is already at work in the world. We want to participate in what God is already doing to the furtherance of the Kingdom of God.

These challenging times call for an uncompromising and courageous evaluation of current church praxis as well as brave new action that spurs the community of Christ as well as individual Christ-followers to renewed faithfulness.

We acknowledge the fact that followers of Jesus must confront and influence a moral/ethical climate that is increasingly inconsistent and contrary to the core values of the Christian faith. Our lifestyles must be steeped in belief that the character and life of Jesus must be freshly incarnated in the lives we live.

A new paradigm is being called for and the Holy Spirit is leading many to not only question but also address these pressing concerns with new dreams and visions of ministry.

The Church, any church, exists to participate in God's redemptive work in the world NOT primarily to enhance our private lives, self-esteem, or self-directed purpose.

The community of faith's economy is built on the giftings of the people of God for ministry. Gift-based ministry is the foundation of a community that is alive and faithful.

Our Savior's @ McCall believe that faithful communities need to build intentionally on the lives and ministries of ALL the people of God. It will be branded as that which deliberately "sends" versus being that which disperses religious goods and services.

We are a "missional church" (or faith community) whose primary commitment is to the missionary calling of the people of God...it is one that aligns itself with God's missionary purposes in the world and is a "sent" community with one of its defining values being incarnating Jesus' life and values in the culture in which it is embedded.

Our Savior's @ McCall believes we are faithful to the call of God by being "in the midst" of culture. We rely on the primacy of scripture, the power of the Holy Spirit, the supportive dynamics of biblical community, a faith that is active and alive, a dedication to the transformation of people's experience, and a commitment to what God is doing in the worldwide Church.

Mission is defined not by what we DO but by our very IDENTITY...we are followers of Jesus are daily on a mission. As Christ-followers, we dedicate ourselves to live like missionaries – to understand culture, proclaim the Gospel in a way that people understand, and are not ashamed to "use" culture in God-glorifying manners. As a congregation we believe that being a missional Christian and community means living on mission wherever we are.

## **Our Core Values**

Our Savior's @ McCall believes in:

1. The primacy of Scripture as our story of living.
2. The indispensable role of the Holy Spirit as equipper and empower.
3. The role of community: Though one would never know it by looking at modern, consumeristic, individualistic, utilitarian Christianity, Christians from the earliest times have known that the journey into Christlikeness for the sake of the world can only be done in loving, supportive, relatively small communities. We aim to both learn and do in the context of community.
4. Theological praxis: We aim to always both learn and do; to never divorce hearing from obedience. Nothing has been learned in a life in Jesus until it can be "done." The fact is, there isn't even a word for 'spiritual' in the bible – we can no longer live a "Christian" life and a "regular life" – we live our one life in and through and for Jesus.
5. Spiritual transformation: The intellectual grasp of ideas--as good and important as that is--can never be the "endgame." Rather, our goal is spiritual transformation into Christlikeness for the sake of the world.
6. Missional focus: As we learn and are formed by the Holy Spirit, God releases us to be the sent people of God in the way in which he intends it. As Karl Barth said: "...to be the church for the sake of the world." We are called to go to the world after we come to Christ. We ARE a mission.
7. Without apology, we love and seek to bless the whole Church...that is our deep desire. Our focus is not to demean, bad mouth, or become arrogant regarding any other ministry in our world. The Church is still and always will be the Body/Bride of Christ. We honor that identity.
8. We will be Incarnational: The incarnation is the theological way of saying that God became flesh. Jesus took on our lives in order to demonstrate once and for all the love of God. As The Message says, "The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighborhood" – John 1:14 We evaluate our ministry by how are we incarnating the presence and person of Jesus in all of what we do and in every place where we find ourselves day in and day out. We believe that ALL OF OUR LIVES should be incarnating Jesus
9. We will be Indigenous: Faith Communities that are indigenous are "in the game" of a local community...we are committed to be involved in the lives and life of our community. We look for ways into the lives of our neighbors not to tell them something and leave but to genuinely love them and invite them into a way of living that they see in us.
10. We will be Intentional. Our Faith community will be intentional about our methods of doing life and ministry as Christ-followers. We are brothers and sisters in Jesus living very risky lives in the "thick" of what is going on in their world. We seek and pray to be a people whom others are in awe of the "love that we have for each other." We seek to be intentional in living for Jesus every day.

## **Our Lifestyle – How we as Disciples of Jesus do life together**

The Bible says clearly that each and every follower of Christ is "called of God" (Ephesians 1). We believe that Jesus does not just call us to a set of faith statements. He rather calls us to follow Him and to live a lifestyle that has as its prime example, the life of Him who we claim to love. We embrace a call to a faithful lifestyle that provides the framework from which to actualize this goal of our Kingdom Living.

Our Savior's @ McCall seeks to build a movement of like-minded followers of Jesus for the purpose of actualizing the Great Commission of God (Matthew 28:16ff). To accomplish this vision, we are

committed to do whatever is possible to encourage full devotion, spiritual transformation, develop/deepen spiritual maturity and provide “training in righteousness” (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

We Covenant together to live a lifestyle that is both voluntary and self-perpetuating. It is foundational only in that it consists of practices that a community of emerging Christ-followers choose, for themselves, to live. It is not meant to be applied in any manner that would “prove” a certain level of spirituality or give rise to pride, condemnation or division. It is purely a commitment to a missional and incarnational lifestyle through Vows and Practices. This covenant is established through the context of the mission of our Discipleship strategy (see above).

The Covenant calls its adherents to enter the following engagements (obligations) as a way of life:

- God-centered life
- Partake in a community of relationships which recognize “church” as being defined as the living and organic body of Christ rather than just a gathering of individuals or a physical institution.
- Live incarnationally in and for the neighborhoods, communities, campuses, networks and world culture in which they live.
- Commit oneself to spiritual formation and development and partaking in the means of God’s grace.

We covenant together to live out the practices of:

1. Mutual Support - Participate regularly in the lives of other members of our congregation for encouragement in living out the mission of the Kingdom of God.
2. Worship - Worship within the context of the fellowship of believers on a regular basis on Sunday mornings (or other worship experience opportunities).
3. Daily Discipline of Prayer - A lifestyle of daily Prayer.
4. Prayer Partnership - Form a relationship with a Prayer Partner. These prayer partnerships enhance the development of our faith community as a faithful one to the call of Jesus.
5. Life embedded in Culture - We embrace the challenge to live as “church” without walls, living openly amongst unbelievers and believers. In this way God in our lives can be seen, challenged or questioned. This will involve us building friendships outside our Christian circles not just with purely ulterior evangelistic motives, but because we genuinely care and love as we have been loved.

As Jesus followers, we are committed:

1. To bear and bare the light of Jesus to a dark world (1 John 2:6-11) even though we may be, at times, one little light in a dark place. We covenant together to be committed to plant Christ-honoring communities/relationships as “Gardens, not Grocery Stores”... committed to long periods of habitation, gestation in and among a chosen neighborhood, long-term relationships, and investment in our geographical place of living.
2. To put down roots, take up jobs, and live in our neighborhoods. To love, live and walk with lost people in the rhythms of everyday life in order to cultivate relationships. In this way our lives will be a witness to Christ, as they incarnate His presence in and among this neighborhood of people.
3. To be bearers of the gospel of salvation in Word and deed. Never with coercion, only as invitation into the life of God through Christ our Lord.
4. With God’s help, to give the Holy Spirit “room” to transform our lives.
5. We are committed to regular practices of spiritual formation that center one's life in Christ and in His Mission.

6. To be a Christian is to follow Christ, in every way. It is to live one's life in such a manner that nothing is excluded. We recognize that we must change. We must become radically different if we want to follow Christ, if we want to be truly alive, as he was truly alive. This is a journey that takes a lifetime.
7. To be a lover of the Church - We are part of the Church. By church we mean, the "Body of Christ" as scripturally defined: God has worked in and through the Church throughout history; we will remain active members in our church family.
8. To be passionately pursuing our mission, and persevere in it - It has been said that "Purity of heart is to choose one thing," and the lives of the great followers of Jesus, from Saint Paul to Mother Teresa bear this out.
9. To believe that all God asks is this – "be who you are for Me and let Me take care of the rest". We ultimately rely on the Holy Spirit to bring about all fruit of our commitment to the mission and ministry.

Our Savior's @ McCall is a ministry committed to "reimagining" the way God calls us to live:

1. We will be externally focused.
2. We will be culturally engaged without being absorbed.
3. We will be incarnationally not institutionally driven.
4. We are about discipleship not church membership.
5. We will be a community patterned after God's missionary purpose in the world.
6. We will be a community that seeks to establish Kingdom outposts to retake territory under the control of the Evil One.
7. We will be a community that seeks to plant, grow, and multiply missionary communities.
8. We will be a community that trains and equips new leaders to enter territories under siege by Dark Forces. We learn in the context of mission not in the security of our comfort zone.
9. We will be a community that highlights character, virtue, and compassionate deeds as the most effective witness to God's Kingdom.
10. We will be a community that connects to Jesus through mission not necessarily through doctrinal precision.
11. We will be a community that adopts an organizational structure and internal forms based on mission not ecclesiastical traditions.
12. We will be a community that pursues relationships across generational, ethnic, economic and cultural lines of distinctions.
13. We will be a community that is about "weakness" rather than strength recognizing that the presence and power of Jesus is perfected in weakness (2 Cor. 12:9).
14. We will be a community that is committed to forming apprentices of Jesus as a measure of success (an extension of your note on discipleship vs. membership... movement vs. club).
15. We will be a community that understands the mission heart of God, as an attribute, and a willingness to participate with Him in what he is doing.
16. We will be a community where people are exploring and rediscovering what it means to be Jesus' sent people as their identity and vocation.
17. We will be a community that knows that they must be a cross-cultural missionary (contextual) people in their own community.
18. We will be a community that is engaged with the culture (in the world) without being absorbed by the culture (not of the world).
19. We will be community that seeks to put the good of their neighbor over their own.
20. We will be a community that will give integrity, morality, good character and conduct, compassion, love and a resurrection life filled with hope preeminence to give credence to their reasoned verbal witness.
21. We will be a community that practices hospitality by welcoming the stranger into the midst of the community.

22. We will be a community that sees ourselves as representatives of Jesus and will do nothing to dishonor his name.
23. We will be a community that will be totally reliant on God in all it does.
24. We will be a community that will be desperately dependent on prayer.
25. We will be a community that will gather for the purpose of worship, encouragement, supplemental teaching, training, strengthening from God's Word, "nourishment" from the means of grace, and to seek God's presence and to be realigned with his God's missionary purpose.
26. We will be a community that intentionally faithful and orthodox in our view of the Gospel and Scripture, but culturally relevant in its methods and practice so that it can engage the worldview of the hearers.
27. We will be a community that is dedicated to be fed deeply on the scriptures.
28. We will be a community where all members are involved in learning to be disciples of Jesus. Growth in discipleship is an expectation.
29. We will be a community that will help people discover and develop their spiritual gifts and will rely on gifted people for ministry instead of talented people.
30. We will be a healing community where people carry each other's burdens and help restore gently.

At Our Savior's @ McCall, we pray that we will be known as a congregation of Jesus followers that are known for:

- Not simply how many people come to our gatherings, but how many people our community serves.
- Not simply how many people attend our ministry, but how many people have we equipped for ministry.
- Not simply how many people minister inside the community, but how many minister outside the community.
- Not simply how many ministries we start, but how many ministries we help.
- Not simply how many unbelievers we bring into the community of faith, but how many 'believers' we help experience healthy community.
- Not simply working through our past hurts, but working alongside the Spirit toward wholeness.
- Not simply counting the resources that God gives us to steward, but counting how many good stewards are we developing for the sake of the world.
- Not simply how we are connecting with our culture but how we are engaging our culture.
- Not simply how effective we are with our mission, but how faithful we are to our God.
- Not simply how much we immerse ourselves in the text, but how faithfully we live in the story of God.
- Not simply how many people we bring into the kingdom, but how much of the kingdom we bring to the earth.