

SESSION 2: A COMMON COMMITMENT

ST. JOHNS PURPOSE AND FOCUS

OUR COMMITMENTS:

OUR VISION: *Connect with Christ, Church and Community.*

A person touched by Jesus Christ through this ministry **becomes** a part of a community of caring and loving people, **submits** his life to Jesus Christ, **grows** to be more like Him, and **shares** His love with others.

At St. Johns, we believe that life is relational. There are four relationships: with God (**theological**), with ourselves (**psychological**), with others (**sociological**), and with things (**ecological or materialistic**).

We believe that our relationship with God is primary since it affects the other three relationships. Once we have come to know and experience God's forgiveness, grace, mercy and love, that will affect how we feel about ourselves, others and things.

Jesus left us two great statements in Scripture which address these relationships:

1. THE GREAT COMMANDMENT:

Jesus said, "***Love the Lord*** your God with all your heart... soul... and mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ***Love your neighbor*** as yourself. All the law and prophets hang on these two commandments." Matthew 22:36-40

2. THE GREAT COMMISSION:

Jesus said, "***Go and make disciples*** of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and ***teaching them*** to obey everything I have commanded you." Matthew 28:19-20

- To "love God with all your heart" is "worship."
- To "love your neighbor as yourself" is "service" or "ministry."
- To "go and make disciples of nations" is "sharing His redeeming love" or "evangelism."
- To "teach them to obey everything I have commanded" is "growth in community" or "discipleship."

THEREFORE, ST. JOHNS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH EXISTS TO

1. **Worship** God in celebration
2. **Grow** in community and knowledge of God's Word
3. **Serve** the church with our gifts and to **share** the good news of salvation of Jesus Christ through mission
4. **Exhibit** good stewardship of the things which He has placed at our disposal for His work.

WE EXIST TO CELEBRATE GOD IN WORSHIP

Worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only. Matthew 4:10

The Father seeks worshipers... and His worshipers must worship Him in spirit and in truth. John 4:23-24

EXPRESSIONS OF WORSHIP:

- Singing (Ephesians 5:19)
- Praying (Psalm 95:6)
- Hearing the Word (John 17:17)
- Giving (1 Corinthians 16:1-2)
- Baptism (Romans 6:3-4)
- Communion (1 Corinthians 11:23-26)
- Meditating (Habakkuk 2:20)
- Commitment (Romans 12:1-2)

AT ST. JOHNS WE OFFER TWO CHOICES FOR WORSHIP

1. 9:00 am - Traditional
2. 11:00 am - Informal, Contemporary

In all services, however we want **inspiration** and **encouragement** so that we each grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ.

WE EXIST TO GROW IN COMMUNITY

Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another--and all the more as you see the Day approaching. Hebrews 10:25

A church must grow **larger** and **smaller** at the same time.

You will grow significantly as a Christian if you join a Sunday School Class and/or Small Group:

- You will be accountable
- You will be encouraged
- You will be cared for by others

- You will have the opportunity to express care for others
- You will be growing in your knowledge of the Bible
- You will be praying

These happen best in community. The heartbeat of St. Johns is **fellowship**.

WE EXIST TO GROW IN KNOWLEDGE OF GOD'S WORD

*Let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and **go on to maturity**... Hebrews 6:1*

***Grow in grace** and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Peter 3:18*

God has given... some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of ministry, so that the Body of Christ may be built up until we all... become mature... like Christ. Ephesians 4:11-13

WE EXIST TO SERVE CHRIST'S CHURCH

Ministry is **meeting needs with love**. Everybody is hurting somewhere.

By this shall all men know that you are my disciples - that you have love for one another. John 13:35

See also: 1 John 3:16-17, Matthew 25:34-40, Hebrews 13:16, Romans 12:13

The heartbeat of St. Johns is our fellowship. Every member needs to use their gifts for Christ's work.

We believe that: **Every member is a minister**
Every task is important
Every member is a "10" in some area!

WE EXIST TO SHARE CHRIST'S LOVE WITH OTHERS

*His intent was that **through the church** the manifold wisdom of God should be made known... Ephesians 3:10*

*Anyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. But who can ask them to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him **unless someone tells him?** Romans 10:13-14 (TLB)*

WHY OUR CHURCH MUST NEVER STOP GROWING

1. Because God loves people

The Lord ... is patient, not wanting anyone to perish, but wants everyone to come to repentance. 2 Peter 3:9, 2 Corinthians 5:14, Luke 15:3-10, Matthew 9:12-13

2. Because God commands us to reach out

Go out into the country...and urge anyone you find to come in, so that My House will be full. Luke 14:23 (TLB)

...you will be my witnesses.... Acts 1:8

3. Because growth is God's will

Under Christ's control, the whole Body is nourished...and grows as **God wants it to grow.** Colossians 2:19 (GN)

Jesus said, "*I will build my church.*" Matthew 16:18

Unbiblical excuses for not growing:

- God isn't interested in numbers.
- Our church wants quality not quantity.
- Large churches are impersonal.

We believe our church must grow **larger** and **smaller** at the same time.

And the Good News of the Kingdom will be preached to the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and THEN the end will come. Matthew 24:14

ST. JOHNS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH BELIEVES

• **In essential beliefs - we have unity.**

There is one Body and one Spirit...there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father of us all... Ephesians 4:4-6

• **In non-essential beliefs - we have liberty.**

Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters...Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To his own master he stands or falls...So then each of us will give an account of himself to God...So whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God. Romans 14:1, 4, 12, 22

• **In all our beliefs - we show love.**

If I hold in my mind not only all human knowledge but also the very secrets of God, and if I have the faith that can move mountains - but have no love, I amount to nothing at all. 1 Corinthians 13:2 (PH)