

Who are we? What is our identity? Why are we here on Cape Cod?

Mission: Lead them to Jesus, Labor with them in Christ, Lift them up to Christ, Let them fly with Christ

Vision: A growing family in Christ, individual growth, and corporate growth (network - casting the net on Cape Cod). Marked by exalting Christ, personal holiness, and love for one another, and (living in anticipation and on mission) - Worship Experience (gathered - drawn in)- Community Impact (scattered - sent out) - **Matt 4:19 Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.**

Values: What do we care about? What is **important** to us?

How can we be faithful to Jesus and the Gospel on Cape Cod, in Mass, in New England, US, World.

What do we value?

We care about Theology: We want to be biblical and in harmony with the character of God

We care about Mission: We want to be proclaiming and demonstrating the Gospel in all we do

We care about Relationships: We want to make sure that we are caring for and loving people as a fruit of a loving relationship with Jesus

The Church is Theological - the church bases its identity and activity on **an understanding of who God is should shape who we are and what we do.**

If a church is going to be **theological**, it needs to be the following things:

Centered - Learning - Praying - Worshipping

1. We are a centered people

Revelation 21:1-4

1 Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. 2 Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them *and* be their God. 4 And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."

The ultimate design of God for His gathered people is Him in the center—we as God's people place Him in the center - (Camped out around the Tabernacle - God is in the center)

We are a centered people—a **people centered on and gathered around Jesus** - Theocentric is Christocentric - It's all about Jesus

When we say that Jesus is in the center, we are then also saying there are certain things that are not in the center (on center stage)

People, mission, gifts, personalities, social issues, agendas, programs, etc ...Jesus is to always be paramount. Jesus is foremost - opening worship songs - are to center us together on Christ - Worship Him first - not the word first - songs about Him, word is about Him, response is about Jesus.

Jesus is:

- The **head** of the church - The **goal** of the church
- The **Chief Shepherd** of the church
- The **One who owns** the church

• The **One who loves** the church

What we do when we come to church is **gather to, for and around Jesus**

He is the one who has saved us!!! He is the one Who embraced us He is the one who has come And is coming again - He's the remedy - So then the church is all about Him!

Clay on the potters wheel - needs to be centered - to be molded properly -

Isa 64:8 But now, O LORD, You are our Father; We are the clay, and You our potter; And all we are the work of Your hand.

2. We are a learning people - We teach/preach and we learn/respond

To center on God we need an understanding of God - by His Word

Jesus modeled this

Matthew 4:23 And Jesus was going about in all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom

Matthew 11:28-30 28 Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.

Jesus connects learning (about Him) with spiritual well-being) Christian living depends upon Christian learning

Indicatives (Fact) - imperatives (Action)

We learn about Jesus and get our concept of who God is **from the Bible** - And we teach the Bible as the final and ultimate authority - **Jesus said in John 17" Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth"**

A primary goal is to learn, know and live the Bible - We are a Listening and Thinking people.

Whether or not we are learning (= growing) becomes a gauge by which we measure the success of all we do as a church - **Am I/are we constantly developing a better understanding of who Christ is? And does this better understanding yield a greater love and obedience? Exalting - Sanctifying - loving**

We are Not about - Consumerism - are my needs being met, are my gifts and talents being used and recognized - am I getting enough attention from the people - am I getting enough time with the leaders, do I feel better about myself when I leave - that is idolatry.

Is Jesus - Known, adored, obeyed and glorified?

3. We are a praying people - communicating with Christ

This is why we pray—because being centered around Jesus, and learning about Jesus, **we are moved to want to commune and communicate with Jesus.**

We ought to be a people that are continually going to God in prayer.

Theology (the Bible) tells us that God is present and listening—prayer is important

Revelation 5:8 Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, **which are the prayers of the saints.**

Our approach in prayer – Praise first (The Bible teaches us that He is bigger than, more important than and more precious than, our own problems and lives)

Simply sharing our problems is not worshipping God, **recalling His character in the midst of them is - recalling His promises - recalling what He has done for us, and the plans.**

We pray for people who need prayer - because He cares and He answers, yes, no, later

4. We are a worshipping people (Singing His Praises)

We are exalting God—having assembled around Jesus, learned of Jesus, communicated with Jesus, we now exalt Jesus

What we mean by worship here...

Revelation 5:9-14

9 And they sang a new song, saying: “You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,

10 And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth.”

11 Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands,

12 saying with a loud voice: “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain To receive power and riches and wisdom, And strength and honor and glory and blessing!”

13 And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying: “Blessing and honor and glory and power *Be* to Him who sits on the throne, And to the Lamb, forever and ever!”

14 Then the four living creatures said, “Amen!” And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped Him who lives forever and ever.

God never asks us to worship Him without giving us a reason to worship Him (listening and learning church)

Psalmist would always say: “**You are worthy because...**”

Second Set of Singing in Worship - (The word of God prepares you for the worship God)

Responding - The **glory due His name** (not about us)

We end the “worship service” with **musical worship**

- Express our exaltation of Jesus
- not being emotionally moved by music - like a concert
- Good Theology produces worship
- Not entertainment, it is relational theology
- Not for your approval - for your participation

Responding to the Word just taught

Communion/prayer available—time to reflect and respond personally in midst of gathering

"Reverent corporate worship then is not optional for the church of God... rather, it brings to expression the very being of the church. It manifests on earth the reality of the heavenly assembly." (Grudem)

Respond in Repentance

Acts 3:19 - "Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,

Repentance so that we can enjoy God

Aware of His Presence

Psalms 22:3 But You *are* holy, Enthroned in the praises of Israel.

In worship something also happens to us—we ourselves are ministered to by God

When we worship **God He meets with us and refreshes us with His presence - carry on beyond**

MISSIONAL: We value, we find it important to be - Missional: adjective form of the noun "mission"

What it means to be "missional":

To be aware of and concerned about what God is doing in the world around us, and to endeavor to be directly and daily involved in that.

To believe that **God is on mission**, in our world, right now - And to be committed to, passionate about, active in God's mission - **being on mission is a manifestation of God's love (nature).**

The local church needs to be both

Attractional: "Come and see" mentality

Evangelistic: "Go and tell" mentality

Come and See = presence of Christ - love of the people - relevance of the Gospel - spirit and truth

Go and tell = we also need to communicate Christ in word and in deed in ways people understand

God's answers (which they may not want) to the questions they are asking and in forms they can comprehend ."

Reliable and Understandable - People ultimately want and need (love and salvation in Christ)

The Incarnation (God going out and becoming like in order to save) is our model for mission - **It teaches us that love "goes to" and "becomes like"**

Steps into other's worlds (location, struggles, worldview, thought processes) and communicates in their way/forms

John 1:14 and 18 And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.18 No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.

To be missional - on mission for Jesus - is to "do, be, and tell the Gospel"

Being the church is all about discovering and becoming passionate and daily involved in God's mission

"The task of every generation is to discover what the Spirit of God is doing and then do that"(Jonathan Edwards)

"We are God's fellow workers " (1 Corinthians 3:9)

We desire to change the world not because we have visions of grandeur for ourselves, nor because we are bleeding-heart humanitarians, but because Christ and the Gospel are changing the world—for the glory of God!

We must realize our "sent-ness"

John 17:18 "As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world."
and 20:21 So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you."

Every member is a minister on mission -- Great Co-mission

Mat 28:19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
Mat 28:20 "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

We come to church and we go be the church - gathered and scattered

Acts 2:46 So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, = gathered;

Acts 8:4 etc = scattered - Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word.

The Spirit of God works both a **centripetal and centrifugal** force on us - Both of those actions have to do with what is happening at a center point—Jesus!

Love your church (people) love your village/city/neighborhood (people)

People in and out of the church - We seek to apply the gospel to their core concerns
We also hold forth Jesus as the only way to be saved! - Either the Gospel is true for all or it is not true at all.

We Value being Relational

We ought to give priority to and be intentional about loving God and loving others in a way that exposes and explains who God is

We need to have our priorities right

1. **Love God**—get our identity and self-worth from God's love
2. **Love others**—give ourselves away in acts of love

The more you dive into God's love and loving God, the more you find that **you need people less and love them more**, and delight more in being **loved by God without being needed**

Relationships are the hardest thing in the world

Comparatively: Theology and mission are a easy

But: Theology insists on relationships, and mission is only accomplished through relationships

Relationships are equal in importance to theology and mission

If we really get theology, we value relationships - If we are really gonna be on mission, we will value relationships

The best experiences we have as humans are relational—from love and laughter, provision, and security

The worst experiences we have as humans are relational—from slander and slavery to adultery and betrayal

Part of what it means to be created, as people, in the image of God, is that we are made for **relationship/community**

God exists as a relational community of love

1. God has always been in relationship as a tri-unity

In the Gospels: We are told that the Father loves and glorifies the Son - the Son glorifies and obeys the Father - the Spirit glorifies the Son and is the promised and anticipated gift of the Father

We also see in the Trinity throughout Gospels this radical focus on the other (other centeredness):

- The Father tells us to look to and listen to His beloved Son
- The Son says to wait for the Holy Spirit
- The Holy Spirit is sent to glorify Jesus
- Jesus directs us to the Father's glory

2. God extended that relationship in the creation of humanity We are meant to exist for relationship

1. Relationship with Him (greatest commandment)
2. Relationship with others (second greatest)

Some of us are deeply wounded and broken because we sought in people what could only be found in God

God's love enables us to have right relational desire and exercise right relational responsibility

Relational **other-centeredness** is

“theological”—it is based on the Bible

“...**Be at peace** with each other” (Mark 9:50)

“...**Wash** one another’s feet” (John 13:14)

“...**Love** one another...” (John 13:34-35; John 15:12, 17)

“**Be devoted** to one another in brotherly love...” (Romans 12:10)

“**Honor** one another above yourselves” (Romans 12:10)

“**Live in harmony** with one another...” (Romans 12:16)

“...**Stop passing judgment** on one another” (Romans 14:13)

“**Accept one another** as Christ accepted you...” (Romans 15:7)

“...**instruct** one another” (Romans 15:4)

“**Greet** one another with a holy kiss...” (Romans 16:16; I Corinthians 16:20, II Cor13:12; I Thessalonians 5:26)

“...**Have equal concern** for each other” (I Corinthians 12:25)

“...**Serve** one another in love” (II Corinthians 13:12)

“**Carry each other’s burdens...**” (Galatians 6:2)

“...**Be patient, bearing** with one another in love” (Ephesians 4:2)

“**Be kind and compassionate** to one another...” (Ephesians 4:32)

“...**forgive** each other...” (Ephesians 4:32)

“**Speak** to one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs” (Ephesians 5:19)

“**Submit** to one another out of reverence for Christ” (Ephesians 5:21)

“...in humility **consider others more important** than yourselves” (Philippians 2:3)

“**Bear with** each other...” (Colossians 3:13)

“...**Forgive** whatever grievances you may have against one another” (Colossians 3:13)

“...**make your love increase and overflow** for each other” (I Thessalonians 3:12)

“**Encourage** one another” (I Thessalonians 4:18, 5:11; Hebrews 10:25)

“...**Build** each other up...” (I Thessalonians 5:11)

“**Spur** one another on toward love and good deeds” (Hebrews 10:24)

“...**Do not slander** one another” (James 4:11)

“**Don’t grumble** against each other” (James 5:9)

“**Confess your sins** to each other...” (James 5:16)

“...**Pray** for each other” (James 5:16)

“...**Love** one another **deeply, from the heart**” (I Peter 1:22, 4:8)

“...**Live in harmony** with one another...” (I Peter 3:8)

“**Offer hospitality** to one another **without grumbling**” (I Peter 4:9)

“**Serve** one another” (I Peter 4:10)

“...**Clothe yourselves with humility** toward one another...” (I Peter 5:15)

“**Love** one another” (I John 3:11, 23, 4:7, 11, 12; II John 5)

We learn from scripture that

Relationships in the church are: - Mandatory - Costly - Messy - Fruitful

Relationships are Mandatory

The Body metaphor

Interconnectivity

Moves us from **independence to interdependence**

Relationships are Costly

The Bride metaphor

The cost of intimacy

Sacrifice—the giving up of self (Greater love has no man than this)

Everybody wants community but few are willing to count the cost

Sacrifice is the prerequisite for community

Relationships are Messy

The Family metaphor (Brothers and sisters in Christ)

You do not get to choose who is in the church

No longer identified by differences

We are committed, not consumers

We do not pick and choose—we become family with people we would not normally be in the same room with!

We will be dissed and dissatisfied—But to leave is a wrecking of what is meant to be God (in the church) brings us into a love relationship with people we don't like—they become a tool that God uses to change us

Relationships are Fruitful

The Building metaphor or Vine Metaphor

We are being built together by God

We are part of something bigger

We achieve something bigger

Mandatory, Costly, Messy, Fruitful (this is just the way it is)

We want to be like a garden, not a factory

A praise report: I hear all the time that when people come here they sense the presence of Jesus

We need to keep pursuing that = Centered, His church/His mission, relational in a radically other centered way.

Church is not something that we go to, it is something we are

Goals: Glorify God and Participate in What He is doing in this World - Continue systematically to study books of the bible, increase in numbers, plant a second service, second location (Hyannis, Falmouth, Chatham, Harwich), Live radio service. Two more community groups by the end of 2015