



2020 Vision

Growing a Church of Gospel Excellence to Change the World

All biblical vision begins and ends with a vision of God. "In the beginning God..." (Genesis 1:1); Christ is "Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end" (Revelation 22:13). This is the vision of Abraham, of Moses, of Isaiah; of Paul in Corinth, of the disciples on the Mount of Transfiguration. This vision of God is revealed naturally in creation (Romans 1:20) and in our conscience (Romans 2:15), though suppressed in unrighteousness (Romans 1:18); it is revealed in Scripture, both Old and New Testaments (2 Timothy 3:16); it is revealed ultimately in Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:2), and illuminated in our hearts by his Holy Spirit (John 16:8, 13). This vision led Abraham by faith to go where he was called to go, Moses to lead God's people out of Egypt, Isaiah to repent and then preach, Paul to remain and continue faithfully preaching and the disciples to worship. It was the vision given to Job at the end of his suffering (Job 42:5). It makes us see ourselves in God's terms, as the clay to the potter (Isaiah 64:8). We humans cannot comprehend God fully, but through Scripture and in Christ we may by his Holy Spirit apprehend through faith the majesty of God. When we have this vision we bow in worship, we repent, we realize anew our finiteness and our fallenness, we are empowered for fresh good works that God has prepared in advance for us to do. At the heart of God's vision is his love for his people, whom he has planned to redeem, through the blood of his own dear Son, for his glory.

This vision of the glory of God means that church is never to be a mundane experience of cranking the handle or business as usual but deliberately, prayerfully, humbly opening the faucet far wider so that we may, if the Lord wills, see the God-centered gospel of Jesus Christ proclaimed in us as a church and through us to the world by the transforming power of the Holy Spirit.

Why “2020 Vision”?

Looking forward to the year 2020 encourages us to see even more clearly (the analogy of twenty-twenty vision) the truth of the Bible and the gospel and its impact upon our personal lives and the life of the church.

Our 2020 Vision Statement is *The God-centered gospel of Jesus Christ proclaimed in us as a church and through us to the world by the transforming power of the Holy Spirit.* With the western world facing perhaps unprecedented challenges, we call College Church to renewed holiness, devotion and commitment to the Lord. From the Bible we see the gospel as the means of renewal. And in the Bible we see a devotion to four core values of the church

Our Core Values

Fellowship—becoming easier to connect; building loving community; partnering with gospel churches

Learning—teaching the Bible expositively; making disciples of Jesus; training for Christian ministry

Outreach—sowing for biblical growth; planting churches; serving global mission

Worship—praying passionately; serving as daily lifestyle; worshipping together biblically.

Our Personal Ministry Commitments

One Large Gathering—commitment to the corporate worship gathering

One Smaller Gathering—commitment to a smaller gathering

One Area of Service in the Church—commitment to at least one area of service in the church

One Outreach—commitment to at least one outreach ministry

Ungirded with Prayer and Giving—commitment to supporting God’s work at College Church as a priority through prayer and giving

Fellowship

Biblical fellowship (“koinonia”) is unity with Christ and therefore community with each other. In the early church, koinonia resulted in sacrificial acts of care, even to the extent of selling houses and providing for the needs of other believers. True biblical

fellowship is not “communism” but it is redemptive “community.” Classic koinonia is exemplified by integrated acts of caring for one another and unusual practical generosity for the support of the work of the gospel.

When we speak of fellowship, and encourage it, we think of things like:

- Fellowship begins with our fellowship with Jesus.
- Fellowship is the delight of mutual caring and shepherding.
- Fellowship is Christian love—a unique sign of the truth of the Christian gospel.
- Fellowship embraces the risk of needing each other and being part of an interdependent community.
- Fellowship is costly and is expressed in personal, financial and relational generosity.
- Fellowship is the great cure for the loneliness of our age. We may find in the future that many people are attracted to our fellowship, and then are drawn to Jesus, the center and heart of our community.

Learning

By learning, we mean a commitment to the Apostles’ teaching in the Bible. Learning the Bible and learning of Christ means far more than just a transfer of information about God, but rather a real life transformation by the grace of God into greater Christlikeness. Learning is a matter of the mind, but it is also a matter of the heart and life. As a church, we are committed to teaching the Bible in every area of church life and ministry. We are to be a “Word driven” community that is shaped and formed by the teaching of the Bible in worldview, and also in very practical ways. That is why we aim to have the Bible taught in our children’s, youth, adult and disability ministries, and from the pulpit. We intentionally seek to have the Bible direct our decisions and vision.

When we talk about learning we can say:

- Bible learning starts at the cradle and continues all the way to the grave as a key way to shape Christlike character.
- Learning is centered on the expositional or expository method of preaching and teaching.
- Learning from the Bible is done well when we “re-preach” the Bible. The Bible is God preaching, and it is our job to let it preach through us, much like greenhouses let the light shine on the growing plants.
- Learning from the Bible exposes the shape of all Scripture to be, as Jesus taught his disciples on the Emmaus Road, speaking of him. In that sense,

the Bible is like a funnel, with the Old Testament leading up to Christ, and the New Testament leading on from Christ to witness to him.

- Learning is not simply a ministry value, but also something that shapes our leadership. To be a truly biblical church, our decisions and structures have to take direction from the Bible, and we must consciously look to the Bible for leadership—Christ is the head of the church and he rules by his Word.

Outreach

We believe that gospel outreach is an expression of Christian love for our neighbor in creative, organic, though necessarily structured, ways. We do not need to wait for someone to be our best friend before we tell them about Christ, but seek to authentically know people, care for them in practical ways, and be a part of their lives. We do these things as a witness to the gospel, which we desire to share verbally with them. Social justice concerns such as care for the poor and the needy are important parts of what it means to be authentically Christian, though they cannot replace the verbal proclamation of the gospel. So it is our desire, locally, regionally, nationally and globally, to be a people who facilitate, prioritize and maximize the kind of courageous gospel witness and lifestyle that will see many people come to faith in Jesus. When we talk about outreach we can say:

- Outreach is a commitment for our community not to be insider focused but outsider aware.
- Outreach is actually a commitment to speak the truth of the gospel even if sometimes that might be offensive or difficult for people to hear.
- Outreach is not dumbing down the message; it is culturally and missionally incarnating the message into a different era and culture.
- Gospel DNA is well and easily remembered by God, Us, Jesus, Response.

God—Made us to be in a relationship of loving obedience.

Us—We have all rebelled against God's rule and therefore have received the just punishment of death.

Jesus—But God, as both just and loving, sent his Son, Jesus, to take the punishment we deserved by dying in our place.

Response—If we accept Jesus' death for us then we receive his life; if we reject his death for us we stand condemned.

- Outreach is a global matter, and we are to have God's heart for the world, not merely for our

own backyard. This means a massive, ongoing commitment to supporting, partnering, training and sending missionary laborers all over the world.

This is an historic commitment of College Church and needs to be developed continually.

Worship

We believe that true biblical worship is a value that encompasses all of life and is not compartmentalized. Paul in Romans 12:1 teaches that Christians are to offer their entire bodies in worship as a living sacrifice. "Worship" language in the New Testament is rarely used of the actual gathered community, but instead describes the active moral and spiritual obedience of born-again Christians. That said, this does not mean that our gathered worship services are not also worship, for surely, they are, and the Old Testament encourages us to view them that way. But it does mean that we are to view our weekly worship gatherings as the beginning, not the end, of our life as a worshiping community. We come together to worship so that we might continue in worship throughout the week and in all of life.

When we talk about worship, we can say:

- Worship is a matter not of style but of substance, for the New Testament seems to say very little about styles of worship, but instead focuses on the substance of worship—Christ.
- Worship as a gathered community is God-centered. That does not mean that when we worship we are "doing something for God." God does not need our worship and is not changed by our worship. Rather, a key part of worship is actually receiving from God.
- In worship, we gather around God and his Word, prepare for that Word with praise, respond to that Word with praise, declare that Word in a way that is understandable to outsiders so they might join in our praise; then go out to live that Word, in the power of the Spirit the rest of the week.
- Worship is to be biblical worship, not worship that is captivated by cultural values, but instead driven by and reflecting biblical values.
- Worship in spirit and truth means a worship that is filled with fear, awe, exuberance, joy and intimacy with God.
- Worship in Acts 2 includes prayer, not only on Sunday but also as a praying community throughout the week.

2020 Vision and me

As we embrace this vision it will require a renewed commitment to the life and mission of College Church. We conceptualize these in five specific personal commitments. Each is a response to the overwhelming love of Christ in the gospel and only possible through the empowering work of God's Holy Spirit in our lives.

One Large Gathering

I will, in reliance upon God's grace

- attend corporate worship each week.
- deliberately prepare myself to hear God's Word on Saturday/Sunday.
- confidently invite people to come to corporate worship.

One Smaller Gathering

I will, in reliance upon God's grace

- be part of a small group, Adult Community, or other smaller ministry gathering for fellowship.
- be involved in the lives of other people in that smaller gathering for mutual support and encouragement.
- connect with Christ and his Word and therefore with each other in this group.

One Area of Service in the Church

I will, in reliance upon God's grace

- serve in at least one ministry area at College Church.
- serve with a gospel focus and godliness of character.
- serve because Jesus came to serve me, not out of guilt but in response to his abundant grace.

One Outreach

I will, in reliance upon God's grace

- get involved in at least one form of gospel outreach.
- adjust my priorities so I can spend time with my neighbor.
- pray for two non-Christians by name:

Unergirded with Prayer and Giving

I will, in reliance upon God's grace...

- pray daily for the work of God at College Church through the monthly prayer guide and other prayer resources.
- attend a Wednesday night prayer meeting at least once a month.
- give sacrificially, generously, eagerly and consistently of my financial resources to the work of College Church. I will strive to give with a regular tithe as a baseline and a priority. I want to grow in giving over and above as I am able.



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