

We Are Wheat Street!

Starting with Why: Why are we here and where are we going?

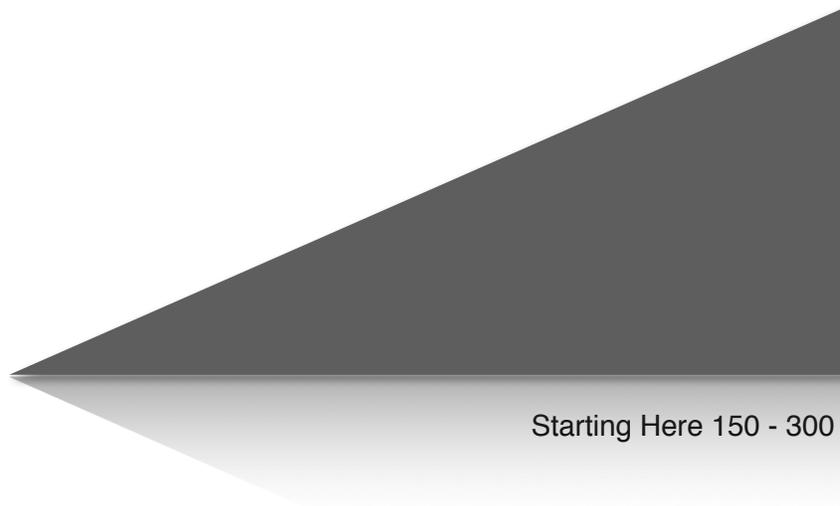
John 14:12

12 Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father.

Gap Theology - the distance between where we are and where God wants us to be growing / going / being and doing?

1. Where are we and where does God want us to be?
2. How is God calling us to make up the gap?
3. Are we reaching who God is calling us to reach?
4. Are we doing what God wants us to do?
5. Are we being who God wants us to be?
6. What needs to happen to fill the gap?

Where we are called to grow / go 700 / 1,250 active members



Starting Here 150 - 300 active members

Looking Back So That We Can Move Forward

What has happened over the last forty years that resulted in us being a church that was full to a church that sits 1,725 that now has an average Sunday attendance of 100 to 150?

Why are we here?

Why did we go from a church that was full to a church that sits 1,725 that has an average Sunday attendance of 100 to 150?

Why?

Why do we need to change or reclaim to be faithful as we seek to share the Gospel with the world today?

What do we need to change or reclaim?

The Vision for Wheat Street Baptist Church

“We are a church with a rich history and an even brighter future.”

John 14:1-14

12 Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father.

13 I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 If in my name you ask me or anything, I will do it.

Vision:

We exist to develop mature disciples of Jesus Christ who make a real difference in the world by actively seeking the justice, freedom, liberation and the peace of God.

Mission:

We are in union with God’s liberative work in the world. We reach outside the walls of the church to be the church. We are committed to innovation and change as God’s calls us to reach and disciple people by doing ministry that makes a *real* difference 365 days a year. We get people closer to God, their community and God’s will for their lives and the church by keeping it real.

Our Core Values:

1. We believe that God’s Word is the authoritative guide for the work of God’s church.
2. We believe that the Holy Spirit is alive and well and speaks to and through the church and we will be led by the Holy Spirit.
3. We believe that Jesus’ model of liberative daily ministry is the model of ministry we should embrace and practice.
4. We believe that God is doing liberative work in the world and our goal is to hear God and be in line with the mission and work of God in the world.
5. We believe that forming mature disciples of Jesus Christ is the primary work of the church.
6. We believe in an open door and an open table, in that all people are welcomed at Wheat Street and they are eligible to serve, worship and give because they are members of the family of God.

Six Lessons from Turnaround Churches by Thom Rainer

1. They led the church to become highly intentional about starting new groups.

The fewest groups started by any one of the churches were four in a one-year period. These churches were serious about new groups, and most of them saw that, at least from a human perspective, as the primary source of turnaround growth.

2. They led the church to a culture of inviting people.

These pastors expressed amazement at how many people started coming to their churches simply because they were invited.

To be clear, this type of invitation was personal, from a member to someone else. It was not some type of major commercial marketing initiative.

Some of the churches had a big event, “invite-a-friend-day,” to kick off this new culture of inviting.

3. They began new member classes.

These classes set the tone for new members. They established the expectations for new members.

After a few months of these classes, many of the pastors began to notice an attitudinal change toward the positive among the members.

4. They began a major community ministry.

Some of the churches “adopted” local schools. Some of the leaders made appointments with key civic leaders to find out how their churches could best help the community. In all cases, church members got out of the comfort of the church buildings and went into the community to serve others.

5. They began to pray for the lost and unchurched by name.

For many of the churches, this type of praying was a first.

Most of them attested that it seemed awkward at first, but it later became a part of their Great Commission culture.

6. The leaders began to focus less on negative people and circumstances and more on God’s possibilities.

The leaders became, in God’s power, people of faith instead of people of fear. This spirit of faith became pervasive in the churches.

Many of the churches saw a negative and unbelieving church culture become a positive and faith-believing culture.

A Monday to Sunday Church: The Ministry of Wheat Street

John 6:1-14

After this Jesus went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, also called the Sea of Tiberias. **2** A large crowd kept following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing for the sick. **3** Jesus went up the mountain and sat down there with his disciples. **4** Now the Passover, the festival of the Jews, was near. **5** When he looked up and saw a large crowd coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, "Where are we to buy bread for these people to eat?" **6** He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he was going to do. **7** Philip answered him, "Six months' wages would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little." **8** One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, **9** "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But what are they among so many people?" **10** Jesus said, "Make the people sit down." Now there was a great deal of grass in the place; so they sat down, about five thousand in all. **11** Then Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish, as much as they wanted. **12** When they were satisfied, he told his disciples, "Gather up the fragments left over, so that nothing may be lost." **13** So they gathered them up, and from the fragments of the five barley loaves, left by those who had eaten, they filled twelve baskets. **14** When the people saw the sign that he had done, they began to say, "This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world."

It Is Not About What We Have but What They Need: A Needs Meeting Ministry

1. Jesus was concerned about what the people needed.
2. Jesus was committed to meeting them in their hour of need.
3. Jesus wasn't focused what he didn't have but rather on what the people needed. Phillip was focused on money Jesus was focused on providing for the people.
4. When you serve the people by giving what you have back to God to meet the people's needs God will multiply your little.
5. When we give what we have back to God to meet the needs of the people we will have left overs.

What we see throughout the ministry of Jesus is that Jesus met people where they were.

Jesus met their needs, not just on Sunday, but on each and everyday of the week.

Jesus walked them along their journey. He was there for them in the time of need and transition.

Jesus was called as are we to serve the people. As we follow Jesus' example we need think about expanding our ministry(ies). We want to expand our approach to ministry to include what we do now and more. We are not proposing we lose our ministry of annual celebrations but rather we are saying that to be like Jesus we need to have a life of ministering to people on a daily basis.

We have to develop our ministries so that they are outward looking. We have to look outside our four walls and ask who is it that needs to be touched by God's church?

The primary focus of our ministry is to look serve those outside.

When we look to serve those outside we are not looking for a return. We are not looking for them to join the church in exchange for our service but rather we serve them because God calls us to serve. **There will be occasion where people will want to unite with Wheat Street as a result of our service but that is not why we do what we do.** We do what we do because we are called by God to love and love demands action.

John 3:16-17

16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

17 "Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

1st John 4:7-21

7 Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. **8** Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. **9** God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. **10** In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. **11** Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. **12** No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

13 By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. **14** And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. **15** God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. **16** So we have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.

17 Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world. **18** There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. **19** We love because he first loved us. **20** Those who say, "I love God," and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have

not seen. **21** The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

How do we make the move to expand our ministry foci?

Annual Day Celebrations and Daily Ministry: An Expanded Ministry Praxis

Missional Emphasis

What is our mission?

Questions to ask you define the mission of your ministry:

External:

Who are we called to serve (ministry specific)?

Where are they?

How do we reach them?

What are their needs?

What can our church provide for them?

How can they enrich and expand our ministry to the city?

How can we walk them on a daily / weekly / monthly basis?

Internal:

What do our members need?

How can we serve them?

How can we help them grow as Christians?

How can we walk them on a daily / weekly / monthly basis?

Ministry Activity:

What can we do and how will we do it?

What concrete actions can we do on a daily, weekly and monthly basis that will meet the needs of those we are called to serve?

Goals for Our Ministry:

6. **Outreach:** Who do we want to reach outside our church and how will we reach them? How will seek to serve them as we develop a relationship with them as to discern their needs and build ministry with them?

1. How many people do we want to reach / new people who are not connected with our church?
2. How many ministry events / actions do we want to have this year that reach people we are not presently reaching(daily / weekly / monthly)? What are they and what is their purpose (WHY)?

3. What is the mission and purpose of our Annual Day as it relates to reaching those we aren't reaching and how will our Annual Day be focused on outreach? How will we know we achieved our goal? What constitutes success for our Annual Day:
 1. Spiritual Goal - how will we as leaders grow closer to Christ?
 2. Discipleship Goal - how will we grow those in Christ?
 3. Numerical Goal - how many non-church members / non-Christians do we plan to reach and impact and how?
 4. Financial Goal (if applicable) - what will our offering be to support the ongoing ministry of God's church?
4. Where are we going to go to be in touch with those God has called us to serve?
7. **In-reach:** How will we serve the present members of our church? What are their needs and how will we meet their needs?
 1. What concrete things will we do on a regular basis throughout the year to serve our present church members.
 2. How will we grow our ministry profile within the church to make room for new members to lead with us in ministry?