

MOBILIZATION *strategy*

How will Bethel mobilize the disciples we are making of those from our community?

Executive Summary

Bethel will mobilize the disciples we are making from our community by helping them find their place in Bethel's ministry. The deacons will use a spiritual gift inventory to help them discover the gifts God has given them, inform them of the needs of the body, and encourage them to use their gifts to meet those needs. Teaching on the spiritual gifts will be provided for new members in the membership class and for current members during a weekend retreat held once every two years.

What is the biblical mandate for mobilization?

From a biblical perspective it is ordinary believers who do the work of ministry. When Christ ascended on high, He gave gifts to men. He gave some as apostles, some as prophets, some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of *the saints for the work of ministry*, for building up the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:11-12). It is the saints, then, who do the work of the ministry. Pastors and officers equip them to do it. We must seek, then, to nurture in our members a heart for Bethel's ministry. It is *their* ministry!

If Bethel is to minister well, the pastor and the congregation must know and fulfill their roles. The biblical role of the pastor is to equip the congregation; the biblical role of the congregation is to do the work of the ministry. In this sense every Christian is called into ministry. Every Christian must be contributing to the church's ministry in order for the whole body to be built up and grow. "From Christ the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love" (Ephesians 4:16).

Every Christian has received a gift, and we are called to be good stewards and to use our gifts to serve one another (1 Peter 4:10). Thus, we need to equip members regularly with Reformed doctrine, personal discipleship skills, evangelism training, and awareness of their God-given gifts and talents. These gifts are listed in several passages of Scripture: Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:8-10; 1 Corinthians 12:28-30; Ephesians 4:11; and 1 Peter 4:11. God has given His church these gifts to enable members to teach, serve, rejoice, pray, give, share the gospel with unsaved friends, and build the whole body up. These gifts vary: all members do not have the same gifts. God's grace is varied (1 Peter 4:10). Referring to the different gifts God has given individual members, Paul uses the illustration of the human body. There are many parts but one body, and all the parts must work well together in mutual appreciation in order for the body to function well. The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you." Nor can the head say to the feet, "I have no need of you." God has given many gifts to Bethel: each member has a unique set of gifts. For our ministry to function well and be vibrant, we must put all these gifts to good use.

By “gifts” we mean special enabling by the Holy Spirit to meet the needs of a church. As members we ought to consider the needs of the body and pray that God would give us special enabling to meet those needs. Identifying one’s spiritual gifts is never intended to limit how one may serve (e.g. “I can’t do that; that’s not my gift.”). Knowing one’s spiritual gifts indicates how the Spirit has often been pleased to use you. It does not indicate the *only* way the Spirit can use you. Rather, with a servant’s heart, we ought to consider the needs of the body and ask the Spirit to enable us to meet that need. At the same time, identifying members’ spiritual gifts helps us discern where the Spirit may use them to meet the needs of the ministry God has called us to do.

How does our mobilization strategy relate to our mission, vision, and values?

Our mission is to spread the gospel of Christ so that Bethel Church, North Dallas, and the world grow in Him. To accomplish this mission we need to make good use of the gifts God has given each person God brings into Bethel from our community.

As we look to the future we envision the deacons making good use of the time, talent, and treasure of Bethel members—both current members and all God will call to be part of our ministry. We picture members serving both in Bethel and out in our community. We are united to Christ and He came not to be served but to serve. As He serves us, we receive strength and motivation to pour ourselves out in service to others. By so doing we show Dallas the love of Christ. Finally, we do not serve merely as individual Christians. We join together in pursuing a common mission as leaders clearly communicate the vision God has given us. The body has many parts, and the parts need to work well together for the body to function well as a whole. Therefore, we are committed to working together with mutual appreciation for one another’s gifts and in like-minded submission to one another.

We estimate that about 55-60% of our congregation is currently serving. This number may increase, if one considers the spouse who must stay home with the kids to enable the other to serve. We thank the Lord for so many servants! We also recognize that there are many gifts at Bethel we are underutilizing. Our goal is to mobilize *all* the people God brings into our fellowship from the community.

How will Bethel mobilize the people God is bringing in from our community?

Our vision sees the deacons to make good use of the time, talent, and treasure of Bethel members. It makes sense, then, that the deacons would be instrumental in mobilizing the body. Our strategy is for the deacons to mobilize Bethel members by helping them discover their gifts using a spiritual gifts inventory and kindling in them a passion for using them for God’s glory. They will administer this inventory for new members as part of a new members class to help them find their place in Bethel’s ministry. Then they will administer it for all members every two years on an ongoing basis.

The deacons will also keep apprised of the needs of our ministry, as well as how our current gifts are deployed (i.e. who is serving where). At their meetings they will pray that God would meet our needs and thank Him for the needs He is meeting. Ultimately their goal is to use the gifts God provides the body to meet the needs of our ministry. To do this well,

the deacons will be in communication with and receive help from the pastors and ministry leaders. Ministry leaders will inform the deacons of needs (e.g. more sound booth workers). Along with the deacons they will also actively look for new members to meet those needs and provide any necessary training.

The discipleship ministry team will also equip our teachers with a clear understanding of the gospel and how to minister it in Bible studies and lessons to grow God's people in the grace and knowledge of Christ.

Spiritual Gifts Inventory

To help people discover their God-given gifts and passions we will make use of a spiritual gifts questionnaire. The one prepared by Benjamin Galan called *Spiritual Gifts* (Rose Publishing) is helpful.

For mobilization to be effective, what other aspects of ministry must be done well?

Outreach

We need gifts to minister well. For the good of the body we need people from our community: we need the gifts Christ provides through those he saves.

Discipleship

For a healthy, mobilized body, we need people to be led by Scriptures to find life in Christ—to be empowered by the Spirit to know Christ's love and thus to be filled with all the fullness of God. How differently we approach the work of ministry when we are filled with all the fullness of God! Life as a disciple is a life of service, and we serve out of the fullness we receive from knowing Christ's love. So discipleship is vital for mobilization.