

VISION *statement*

bethel church | pca

All over the world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing, just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and understood God's grace in all its truth.
—Colossians 1:6

Having been convinced from years of God's faithfulness to us as a church that God truly is able to do far more than all we ask or imagine, we are emboldened to dream Bethel's future and see what the Lord is pleased to do with it (Ephesians 3:20; Proverbs 16:9). We invite all who come to Bethel to share this vision with us!

We envision Bethel as an exciting place to be for one all-consuming reason: we hear the gospel every week. The good news of what God has done for us in Christ is the sum and substance of every sermon and Bible study, and people find themselves growing closer to God as a result. The knowledge of Christ's finished work and the greatness of His love for us is filling us with all of the fullness of God and sending us out to serve Bethel, the North Dallas community, and the world out of the fullness of this joy (Ephesians 3:19). We cannot stop sharing our excitement!

We see people who simply love being together. It's inevitable, because the gospel draws strangers together in a shared experience of joy! We see people staying long after worship services end, getting together during the week, and inviting newcomers into their homes. Single or married, rich or poor, immigrant or native Texan or new to the area, Bethel is a refuge, a place where people develop deep relationships, where they love and are loved.

Worship is joyful because the news is good. We will praise God in Word, music, prayer, and sacraments. Music is excellent because the gospel puts heart and soul into our worship. Music style gives voice to the full range of human emotion. In worship God feeds us through the astonishing grace of Christ that secures our hope and lifts downcast and hurting hearts. We leave communal worship refreshed by the gospel to do the good works Christ has prepared for us to do. Thus our worship flows out into every aspect of our lives.

We envision people praying as God's beloved children. We pray because the gospel gives us startling intimacy with God, our heavenly Father. As His children, we confess our sins without fear. We take full advantage of this access, asking Him to bring His kingdom in our lives and in our world. We spend as much time adoring Him and praising Him for all He has done as we do seeking His help for our daily needs.

We see elders shepherding the flock and deacons making good use of the time, talent, and treasure of Bethel's members. Through good communication they earn the trust of the congregation.

We picture members serving both in Bethel and in our community. Christ said He came not to be served but to serve. As He serves us, we find strength and motivation to pour ourselves out in service to others. Sacrificial service is full of hardships and heartache, but Christ's great love moves our hearts to love others as He loves us.

We anticipate a ministry where hardworking people find rest and catch their breath.

Many people move to Dallas for work, and we work hard here, both in the workplace and in the home. To work is good: God Himself is always at work (John 5:17). But we get exhausted and need rest. The gospel gives us that rest! Christ has finished all the work necessary for our salvation and invites us to rest in Him. Because we do not have to work for our salvation, the gospel energizes us to serve others in our vocations and ministries. We see Bethel members working with a whole new mindset—we work as those who are already approved, whose boss (Christ!) loves us, whose inheritance is secure, and who labor with the strength and wisdom God provides. Life is busy here in Dallas, but the gospel puts fresh wind in our sails.

We see discipleship and evangelism happening naturally and seamlessly as the gospel knocks down the walls that attempt to keep God in a private, spiritual realm. Here's how we see it happening. The whole congregation is engaged in one long, unending conversation about the gospel. As people are equipped with a deeper and clearer understanding of the gospel and its implications for life, it becomes increasingly evident that the gospel speaks to all of life. Thus, to interact with others in any meaningful way is to discuss Christ. In this way discipleship and evangelism happen naturally and seamlessly. They truly become a way of life. We anticipate adult conversions as a regular occurrence and youths professing faith in Christ and standing firm in their faith for the rest of their lives.

Members are passionate about God's Word as summarized in the Reformed creeds and confessions simply because their biblical truths provide the richest way to know Christ and the fullest way to give all glory to God. We want the truths taught in the Reformed creeds to shape our thinking about all of life.

We foresee a church committed to missions and church planting. It keeps growing to 500, and every time it does, we plant another church. 10% of our budget goes to missions.

We contemplate a steady stream of seminary interns being trained to minister the gospel out of the conviction that it is the only way to grow people to full maturity in Christ.

We picture an excellently maintained, up-to-date facility, with a new playground, where the surrounding community feels welcome to use the grounds during the week. On Sunday mornings we hear laughter over a cup of really good coffee.

What gives us confidence to dream so boldly? God is at work! All over the world the gospel is bearing fruit and growing (Col. 1:6). We envision a people radically gripped by the gospel. We show such great love and sacrificial service that the world takes notice. When they do, our answer will be ready. What they see in us is but a dim reflection of the breathtaking glory of Christ and His great love!