



VISION2017

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Vision Info Guide

Introduction

What would happen if every member of Ninth & O Baptist Church increased in faithfulness and intentionality in their commitment to community at church and bold witness to the gospel?

Imagine your neighbor across the street who currently doesn't attend church experiencing the joy, support, and friendships you enjoy at Ninth & O, all because you invited them to come.

Imagine your unbelieving co-worker hearing about the gospel for the first time through your faithful witness and realizing that it's for her, too, and that all of her deepest longings are met in Jesus.

Imagine your lost brother-in-law coming to faith in Jesus Christ, joining the church, and becoming a faithful, growing, and contributing member of the body.

Imagine expanding our church facilities to accommodate the increasing numbers of people visiting and joining our church.

Imagine your kids being excited to come to church every Wednesday and Sunday because they've developed meaningful friendships as a result of your family's consistent, faithful church attendance.

Jesus' love for us calls and compels us to deepen our faithfulness to His church. We want to see these things, and many more like them, begin to happen with such frequency that they seem common place at Ninth & O. How amazing

would it be to see the number of guests double or even triple? How wonderful would it be to come to church each week knowing that there will be a baptism because God is saving the lost through the effective witness of faithful members of our church? How marvelous would it be to know that our children are seeing a pattern of faithful attendance, service, and giving not only by their parents, but by all who are members of our church--a pattern by which they can set the trajectory of their own lives.

In 2017, our desire is to grow together in intentional community and witness. We're calling this vision *Pressing In and Reaching Out*. You will find in the following pages a fresh clarification of our purpose, values, and vision as a church. We will be adopting a new church logo that embodies these values. We are launching a redesigned website that will be of value for our members and non-members alike. But all of these things are simply an aid to us as a church to keep our focus on the primary responsibilities we have. These are not new things. Indeed, all Christians are called to be faithful members of the covenant community we call the church. And all Christians are called to be faithful witnesses to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Our desire for 2017 is that we as a church would develop habits of commitment to both of these priorities, and in doing so, to see Ninth & O grow in faithfulness and fruitfulness for the glory of the Father.

It has been said that if we want something we've never had, then we must do something we've never done. Perhaps this year will mark a turning point for us as a church.

But more specifically, our prayer is that this year would mark a turning point for each individual member of the church. We pray that God would use us individually and corporately in Louisville through our faithfulness to His mission.

So let's Press In and Reach Out together, empowered by the Holy Spirit, preaching the hope of Jesus to the praise of our Father's glory and grace.

Defining Terms: Purpose, Values, and Vision

The terms “Purpose,” “Core Values,” and “Vision” are often misunderstood and create confusion. When a common definition for each term is understood by all within an organization, these important concepts help to define what is most important and what is superfluous to the organization, thus strengthening organizational health and creating alignment, momentum, and growth.

What is a “Purpose Statement?”

The reason an organization exists is defined in its purpose statement. The purpose or mission of a church is found in the Great Commandment, the Great Commission, and the example of the early church in Acts 2 (worship, ministry, fellowship, discipleship, and evangelism). The purpose of the Church never changes under any circumstance because it has been given by Jesus Himself to the Church.

What are “Core Values?”

“Core values are the essential and enduring tenets of an organization. A small set of timeless guiding principles, core values require no external justification; they have intrinsic value and importance to those inside the organization.”¹

¹ Jerry Poras and Jim Collins, “Building Your Company’s Vision,” <http://faculty.washington.edu/janegf/buildingvision.html>.

Core values are sometimes referred to as the DNA or identity of an organization. What makes an organization tick? What are the tenets of baseline importance for an organization?

Qualities of Core Values

The core values and purpose of an organization, if properly conceived, remain fixed. They are timeless. When accurately defined, the core values are not violated even if they were to put the organization at a competitive disadvantage.

Core values are not “set” but are discovered.² What is an organization known for? What does an organization do well? To discover your core values, repeatedly ask the question, “Why?” At bottom, you will find tenets that are, from the organization’s perspective, self-evident and need no justification. These tenets are the core values of an organization.

What Is a “Vision Statement?”

The vision of a church is found in what that church desires to be or do; it describes a desired end-state. Whereas the core values and purpose define the core ideology of an organization, the vision statement defines the envisioned future of an organization. Whereas the core values are a statement of what is, a vision statement articulates what ought to be. Whereas the core values articulate the identity

²Ibid.

of an organization, a vision statement articulates the destination of an organization.

A vision statement is a clearly articulated goal for an organization's envisioned future. Vision statements change as God's leading changes, so their time frames can vary significantly. They can last for a significant amount of time (15-30 years or more) or for a short period of time (six months or less).

Why Is This Important?

Rightly articulating the core values and vision of an organization and adhering to those values and vision provides clarity and alignment in the organization on why we exist, what's important to us, and where we're going.

A right understanding of an organization's values and vision results in improved organizational health through alignment of purpose, values, and vision.

Knowing the values and vision answers questions as to how an organization should spend its resources and time, both on a daily basis and in long-term strategic planning.

Identifying and adhering to the values and vision creates momentum for the organization as the vision flows from the intrinsically held values.

Ninth & O's Purpose

The purpose for any local church fellowship is outlined in the New Testament. Ninth & O Baptist Church recognizes the three following ideas as the purpose and mission of the church.

The Great Commandment

Mark 12:29-31: "Jesus answered, 'The most important [commandment] is, "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.'" The second is this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." There is no other commandment greater than these.'"

The Great Commission

Matthew 28:18-20: "And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.'"

The Example of the Early Church

Acts 2:42: "And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers."

Ninth & O's Core Values

At Ninth & O, we have identified the following four core values.

1. Truth

In a world of shifting allegiances and faulty foundations, we seek to stand firmly upon the truth revealed in the Bible (John 17:17, Matthew 7:24-27). The Bible provides for us the only reliable guide for life, revealing to us the person and work of our Triune God (Jesus Himself being the very embodiment of truth--John 14:6), the way of salvation (2 Timothy 3:15), and our duty unto God (2 Timothy 3:16). We believe that the Bible is the Word of God, completely true and without any mixture of error. We are not searching for the words of God within the Bible; it is in its entirety the Word of God (2 Timothy 3:16-17, 2 Peter 1:21). Because God has spoken, we are accountable to it. Therefore, everything we believe and do as a church is informed and instructed by the Bible (Ephesians 2:20, James 1:22-25, John 14:15). Everything we teach is rooted in the Bible (2 Timothy 4:1-2, 2 Timothy 4:13).

2. Worship

The primary purpose of man's existence is to worship (Romans 11:36, 1 Corinthians 10:31, Revelation 4:11). True Christian worship is directed to the Father through the merit of Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit (John 4:23). As a

congregation, we engage in worship through singing, meditating on the truths of Scripture as presented through readings and the sermon, participating in spirit with the offered prayers, giving financially during the offering, listening expectantly for ministry opportunities, and serving one another through fellowship and the right practice of spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12-14). Our worship should be marked by a passionate love of God and resolve to glorify Him in all we do (Matthew 22:34-40, Colossians 3:16-17).

3. Community

The transformational love of Jesus provides the contours of biblical community (John 13:34). The God whom we worship is Triune, existing eternally as a community of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19). As those who are made in His image, human flourishing requires us to live in communities of love and care (Genesis 1:27, Hebrews 10:25). The authentic community fostered at Ninth & O is a radical call to intentional relational investment amid a culture of mere attendance and casual involvement. As a church family, we seek together to experience more deeply the joys, sorrows, and all realities of life in gospel-centered community (Galatians 6:2).

4. Missions

Jesus came to Earth on a mission to redeem and restore humanity and the cosmos (Luke 19:10, Romans 8, Ephesians 1:21-23). Through His death and resurrection, Jesus has perfectly accomplished this salvific work, and we believe and affirm that God has given His people, the Church, the mission of bearing witness to this salvation among all peoples of the earth (Matthew 28:19-20). Continuing Jesus' ministry of reconciliation, Christians are called to serve as agents of reconciliation and justice (Luke 10:25-37, 2 Corinthians 5:18-20), even while not being conformed to the pattern of the world (John 17:14-16, Acts 1:8). Rooted in the truth, we worshipfully work together to advance the gospel of Jesus Christ among all peoples.

Our New Church Logo

Beginning in 2017, Ninth & O will adopt the logo shown below as the church logo.



This logo represents a modern update of the logo we've utilized for several years. The new emblem incorporates our four core values:

- The cross represents Truth
- The upward arrow represents Worship
- The right arrow represents Community
- The left arrow represents Missions

This logo will serve as a reminder to ourselves and our community of that which is most important to us.

The 2017 Vision: Pressing In and Reaching Out



Any organization, local church or otherwise, who seeks to grow and advance in their mission, does well to clarify an envisioned future. In doing so, we are honest about where things are currently and recognize how things ought to be. While we hold to an unchangeable purpose and unchanging values, the pursuit of a defined vision works to deepen our commitment and faithfulness to those ideals which are most important to us.

For 2017, we are working toward fulfilling a vision of greater intentionality in our membership and witness. There are two key components in our 2017 Vision: *Pressing In* and *Reaching Out*.

Pressing In

Pressing In represents an effort toward deepening our commitment and intentionality as members of the church. This is represented in three primary areas:

1. *Presence*

The first component of *Pressing In* is our ministry of presence. To be intentional as a community requires that we all make extra effort to be together. Certainly this includes our times of corporate worship, as the author of Hebrews reminds us, “Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near” (Hebrews 10:23-25). It also comes as we invest ourselves in one another in community by sharing a cup of coffee with a new friend from church, having another family from your BFG over for dinner, meeting with a brother from church for spiritual accountability, or meeting a church member from another generation for lunch. We want to *press in* to our faith family by being present with one another.

2. *Service*

The second component of *Pressing In* is service. Paul writes, “For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we,

though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them..." (Romans 12:4-6a). We use our gifts for the benefit of one another when we serve on the nursery rotation, arrange chairs for our BFG, help a single mom move to a new apartment, or run sound in the worship service. We want to *press in* by serving one another with the unique gifts God has given each of us individually.

3. *Giving*

The third component of *Pressing In* is giving. Jesus Himself promised, "...give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you" (Luke 6:38). We want to *press in* through the sacrificial financial gifts given as our tithes and offerings, the Great Commission Offering (GCO), and other opportunities--all to advance the kingdom, knowing that "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matthew 6:21).

Reaching Out

Reaching Out represents an effort toward deepening our commitment and intentionality as witnesses of the gospel of Jesus Christ. This is represented in three primary areas:

1. *Intercede*

The first component of *Reaching Out* is intercession--prayer for specific lost individuals to whom we desire to witness. The Apostle Paul requested these prayers for His ministry as an example to us. He writes in Colossians 4:2-4, "Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving. At the same time, pray also for us, *that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison—that I may make it clear, which is how I ought to speak.*" We must pray with faith and expectancy that God will open to us a door for the word. As we do so, we will find multiplied opportunities to share the hope of Jesus Christ.

2. *Invest*

The second component of *Reaching Out* is to invest. Hebrews 13:2 reminds us, "Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers..." A faithful witness involves investing in relationships with unbelievers. It has been said that the process of evangelism is really quite simple: Make a friend, be a friend, and bring your friend to Jesus. We invest in unbelievers and

earn their trust by having them into our home to watch the game, offering to care for their dog when they go out of town, helping to shovel snow in their driveway, or wishing them a happy birthday. In these simple ways of investing, we demonstrate the love of Jesus and open up opportunities for invitation.

3. *Invite*

The third component of *Reaching Out* is invitation. Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 5:20, "...we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God." Sometimes the invitation to our friend is to an upcoming church service or event. Sometimes the invitation comes at the end of a gospel presentation. We desire to deepen our faithfulness as a church by *Reaching Out* in our invitations to church and to belief in Jesus.

Goals for 2017

In an effort to move the 2017 vision from the abstract to the concrete, we have developed two checklists for the church. Each checklist corresponds with one component of the *Pressing In* and *Reaching Out* vision emphasis. Our desire is for every church member to participate fully on these items. But we don't see these items as an end in themselves. Rather, they are a catalyst to developing habits of *Pressing In* and *Reaching Out* that will last long past 2017.

Pressing In Checklist

- January: *Pressing In* Prayer Focus
 - Pray that 2017 is marked by deeper community within the church and greater commitment to the church.
- February: Dinner or Dessert, Anyone?
 - Pencil into your 2017 calendar 6 dates to invite BFG friends over for dinner or dessert.
- March: Perfect Attendance Challenge
 - Make an effort to attend worship and BFG every Sunday in March.
- April: Praise & Prayer
 - Commit to participate in the 5 weeks of Praise & Prayer on Wednesdays from April 19– May 17.
- May: Meet Someone New Month

- Introduce yourself to someone new every week, whether a guest or a church member you recognize but have never met.
- June: Generational Gap Gathering
 - Bridge the generational gap by spending time outside of regular church events with a member born in a different generation.
- July: 6-Month Membership Health Checkup
 - Monitor your membership health by reviewing attendance, service, and giving reports to be provided by the church.
- August : *I Will Read I Will*
 - Commit to read *I Will* before kicking off the church-wide book study on August 13.
- September: Chair-Change Challenge
 - Sit in a different chair as a means to meet new people. Apply this idea to the worship service, BFGs, and BCMs.
- October: 10 Minutes Early Challenge
 - Arrive 10 minutes early to church-related activities.
- November: Persecuted Church Week
 - Participate in prayer and fasting as a church community during Praying for the Persecuted Church Week (Oct 31 – Nov 6).
- December: "Pressing In" Survey
 - Provide feedback on your 2017 "pressing in" experience. Surveys will be provided in December.

Reaching Out Checklist

- January: *Reaching Out* Prayer Focus
 - Pray that 2017 is marked by greater intentionality to reach nonbelievers – to intercede, to invest, to invite.
- February: Intercede for Your Neighbors
 - Sign up at Pray4EveryHome.com, and commit to prayer walk your neighborhood once a month.
- March: Invest by Hanging Out
 - Make plans to spend time with a non-believing neighbor or friend.
- April: Easter Invite
 - Hand out 10 Easter service invite cards, and intercede daily for those you've invited.
- May: Be a Witness
 - Share the gospel with at least 1 unbeliever.
- June: VBS Invite
 - Hand out 10 VBS invite cards, and intercede daily for those you've invited.
- July: Lil' Cookout
 - Invest in non-believing friends or neighbors by hosting a cookout.
- August: Invite Sunday
 - Hand out 10 Invite Sunday invite cards, and share the gospel with at least 1 person.
- September: Missions Day

- Participate in Missions Sunday (Sept. 17) by requesting information on at least 1 upcoming missions activity.
- October: Fall Fest Invite and Serve
 - Hand out 10 Fall Fest invite cards, and serve at Fall Fest (Oct. 14).
- November: Dessert Social
 - Invest in a non-believing friend or neighbor by inviting them for dessert.
- December: Sharing Christ at Christmas
 - Share the Christmas story with a non-believing family member or friend.

Benchmarks for 2017

As a church, our vision is to see the following growth by January 1, 2018, through our intentional effort in completing the checklists.

- Increase in average Sunday attendance by 25 people per quarter.
- A total of 750 gospel engagements in 2017.