

Growing in Christ Together, Becoming His Followers in the World
The Vision of St. John's
Advent 2014

You move us to delight in praising You; for You have formed us for Yourself, and our hearts are restless till they find rest in You. Augustine

Since our beginning, the vision for St. John's was that it would be a "garden for human flourishing." We are committed to make the Gospel of Jesus Christ the center of our life together, and we believe the Gospel is the key to human flourishing.¹ Our fast-paced, technology-saturated world is a challenging environment for those who desire to flourish in their relationship with God. St. John's will nurture and cultivate a way of being with God that helps us resist the pressures of our culture and offers ancient rhythms and deep communion with God.²

At St. John's, we are first and foremost Christians, not Anglicans, but we intentionally look to the Anglican Way for practices and resources to shape our worship and discipleship. We seek to make our journey together with Christ with the wisdom and disciplines of the ancient faith applied in fresh ways. We believe the scriptures are trustworthy for the living of our lives. We believe that the liturgy provides helpful boundaries and words for our corporate worship.

We recognize three aspects of our common life as a church that help us live into an alternative vision of human flourishing:

First, we are a *liturgical, worshipping community*. In worship, we hear the word of forgiveness, and God renews, refreshes and reorients our hearts and minds to His kingdom and purposes. Worship flows into our daily lives as we are sent out in mission—family, community, work, and world.³

Second, we are a *teaching-learning community*. Jesus said we make disciples by teaching; we flourish in our life, work and relationships as we grow in the wisdom and understanding provided by the Scriptures.⁴

Finally, we are a *missional community*. God calls us to be faithfully present in the places He has put us, contributing to the flourishing of the greater community in which we are a part. We do this by living out our vocations in the world and by ministering to the broken and disenfranchised, to the materially poor and the spiritual poor in our community and to the ends of the earth.⁵

We also recognize that flourishing involves not only what we do, but how we do it. The following are important "ways" of carrying out our mission:

Organic Approach—God causes the growth. This is freeing: the task of ministry leaders becomes cultivating and nurturing the life God gives, and creating structures and contexts where it can grow and express itself in ways that glorify God.⁶

Sabbath Rhythms—Rhythms of work and rest are fundamental to human flourishing. We desire to live into these Sabbath rhythms of work and rest as a church, as families and as individuals. These rhythms help us receive our homes, our families, our friends, and our church as gifts from God—leading to gratitude and worship.⁷

Team-Based Ministry—We will develop ministry teams that reflect the interpenetrating fellowship and love of the triune God: relationship, mutuality, and unity in diversity. Whenever possible, teams will be collaborative, trusting, empowering, and learning.⁸

Limited Spans of Care—Our finitude means that we have limited time, energy, and resources. Our organizational structure should provide a limited spans of care so that ministry leaders can focus on a few and give themselves to them. Thus, leaders need to be developed within the church and groups need to be multiplied on a consistent basis.⁹

¹ Colossians 1:5b-6, Titus 3:3-7, John 1:1-18

² Romans 12:1-2, Ephesians 5:15-21

³ Romans 12:1-2, 1 John 1:1-2:2, Romans 5:1-5, Hebrews 10:19-25

⁴ Matthew 28:18-20, Colossians 3:12-17, 2 Timothy 3:16, Proverbs 3:1-12

⁵ Isaiah 61:1-4, Jeremiah 29:4-7, Matthew 28:18-20, John 17:6-19, 20:19-23

⁶ 1 Corinthians 3:6-7, Mark 4:26-29, Ephesians 1:18-19

⁷ Genesis 1:26-2:3, Exodus 20:8-11, Deuteronomy 5:12-14, Mark 2:23-28, Hebrews 4:9-10

⁸ John 17:20-23, Romans 12: 3-8, Ephesians 4:1-16, 1 Corinthians 12

⁹ 2 Timothy 2:1-7