

GROWING FOLLOWERS OF JESUS



OUR VISION

Under God, we desire to be a **church through which God is transforming his people and his world** (Acts 2:42-47). This will mean;

1. We are a church where God is loved and worshipped as King.
2. We are warm and inviting and connect newcomers into our community.
3. We joyfully give up what we have for others in the church.
4. We devote ourselves to fellowship, prayer and hospitality.
5. We are deliberately and daily shaped by God's Word.
6. All members are engaged and serving within the church.
7. We have an impact on the world around us and are growing through conversion.

Acts 2:42-47

⁴² They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.⁴³ Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles.⁴⁴ All the believers were together and had everything in common.⁴⁵ Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need.⁴⁶ Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts,⁴⁷ praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

OUR MISSION:

The mission of Ashfield-Petersham Presbyterian Church (how we hope to achieve our vision) is the same mission that Jesus gave to all his followers: **to make disciples** (Matthew 28:19-20). We express this as **"growing followers of Jesus"**. This describes **the goal** as well as **the process**. We aim to be followers who are growing. And our task is to grow people as followers.

Matthew 28:19-20

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,²⁰ teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

OUTCOME AREAS:

But what does a growing disciple look like? What are we aiming, under God, to "produce"? (Colossians 1:28-29)

Growing disciples are those who;

1. Love God (Mk 12:29-30)
2. Love one another (Mk 12:31)
3. Are shaped by God's Word (2 Tim 3:16-17)
4. Serve (Eph 4:12)
5. Are on mission (Col 4:5-6)

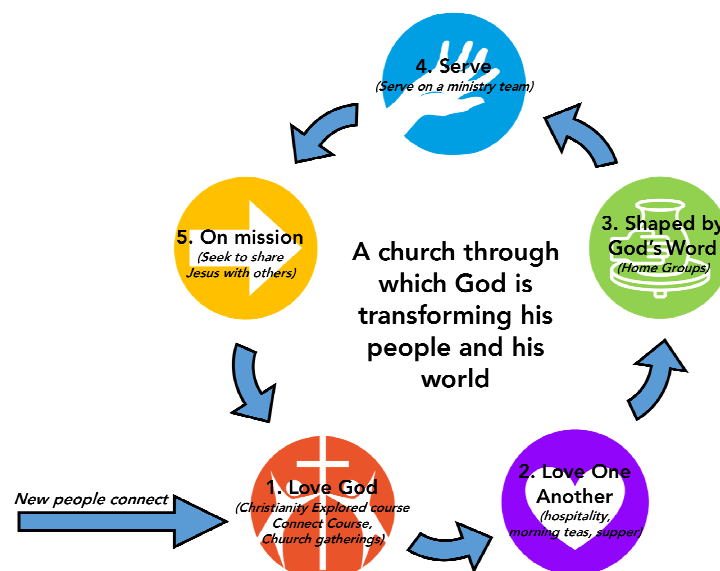


These **five outcome areas** are also a description of what a healthy church will look like. Each area influences the others. A church is not healthy if only 3 or 4 of the areas are effective. They all need to be effective.

DISCIPLESHIP STEPS

Our task, at Ashfield Presbyterian Church, is to encourage, enable and equip people to grow in each of these areas. For the sake of simplicity, as new people join us they are encouraged to move along a series of steps, where each new aspect builds on the previous ones (Eph 4:12-16). (We don't cease working on one area because we've moved onto another area. In fact, the areas are interconnected and interdependent.)

1. The first step to being a follower of Jesus is to **love God** (Mark 12:29-30). In the church context, you are encouraged to take this step in our *Christianity Explored* course, our church membership course *Connect* and in our regular Sunday gatherings.
2. An important part of our Sunday gatherings are morning tea and supper. We also aim to show hospitality to one another. These are opportunities for people to experience and show **love for one another** (Mark 12:31). This is the second discipleship step we encourage people to take.
3. Once people are beginning to know and love others, the third step is being **shaped by God's Word** (2 Timothy 3:16-17). This happens, principally, in Home Groups (as well as in our Sunday gatherings). We meet mid-week, in one another's homes, to study the Bible, to pray for and care for one another.
4. The fourth step is to **serve** on a ministry team by using your gifts to build up the church – to encourage people to grow as followers of Jesus (Ephesians 4:12). There are many gifts, and many ways to serve the church.
5. The fifth step for growing followers is to be **on mission**: to be looking for opportunities to share Jesus with your friends, family and community (Colossians 4:5-6). This can happen by serving on a team that runs evangelistic courses or events, or individually as you seek to share Jesus.



DISCLAIMERS:

- It's important to remember that all we do is **a response to God's grace to us in Jesus**, not a means of earning his favour (Ephesians 2:8-10).
- We don't seek to 'do things' for God, but rather to live lives worthy of the calling we have received (Ephesians 4:1), doing it all for his glory (1 Corinthians 10:31).
- All growth is of God, but he also calls us **to do all we can** with the means he has given us (Matthew 25:14-30).
- We want to be organised and clear, not because we're 'corporate', but because **we love people**, and don't want to lose any who 'slip through the cracks' or 'leave through the back door'.
- Although generously using your gifts will benefit others, we want you to serve, principally, because **this is how God will mature you** in character, convictions and competency.

NEXT STEPS? STAY TUNED!

What will this mean for how we do things at church? Stay tuned for more information!