

## WHO WE ARE: GOD'S FAMILY

The [Seattle Freeze](#) is real. One of our beloved city's greatest weaknesses is failing to be a place of welcome and hospitality for newcomers and outsiders. More than just a Seattle problem, we live in a culture that continues to grow increasingly individualistic, polarized, digitized, and isolated.

But the gospel of Jesus Christ transforms us! Through his life, death, resurrection, ascension, and sending of his Holy Spirit, we have been welcomed into a new community called the family of God. Regardless of our biological family backgrounds, *God is our Father, and so as brothers and sisters, we belong to him and one another.* So we are counter-cultural in 3 ways: interdependent, unified and diverse, authentic and known.

### God's Family is Interdependent

Our culture seeks to live lives of independence and autonomy. Yet, God has not only made us family for our own sake, but for the sake of others. Now we seek to reflect his generosity through serving one another and the world. This means we need each other, so we seek to meet the needs of one another in our church community and beyond through sacrificial giving and service. Families grow, and we hope all people who worship with us—no matter where they are on the spectrum of faith and doubt—can feel a sense of belonging as they take steps towards Jesus and we grow side by side.

### God's Family is Unified and Diverse

We live in a society that is greatly segregated—in every regard, whether that be by our culture, class, country, color; whether it's by political affiliation, gender, or even age—we like being with like-kind. The church of Jesus Christ is to be altogether different. We are united by his blood—formed into one new humanity.

This means that we seek to be a **multi-generational** church where older men and women are investing real life discipleship into the next generation of men, women, and children and raising up leaders from among them. It also means we seek to be a **multi-ethnic church**, reconciled to one another and worshiping Jesus together. We seek to be a place where **everyone**, no matter their social status, achievements, or struggles, contributes their gifts for the good of the church body and is joined together under the lordship of Jesus Christ.

## God's Family is Authentic and Known

We are conditioned by our culture to believe we are our truest selves when we embody and embrace our unquestioned desires. At the same time, we are taught to project a curated and edited version of our lives in the digital sphere. This leads to duplicitous lives, distorted identities, and broken relationships—all in an effort to protect ourselves from the vulnerability of the real us being seen or surrendered.

But the family of God is different. Our new identity has freed us from pretense and brought us into the light of Christ where we can be both authentic and known yet clean and forgiven. And so, we are growing increasingly whole-hearted in our devotion to him, increasingly secure in who we are, and increasingly true to our truest selves.

*Gen. 12:2-3; Acts 2; 1 Cor. 12:4-7; Eph. 2:11-22; Titus 2:1-8; Gal. 6:9-10 1 John 1:5-10*

## WHERE WE ARE GOING: ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN

*In West Seattle. In the Puget Sound. To the ends of the earth.*

Our culture teaches us to seek after that which is immediate and temporal, leaving us empty and longing for meaning and something that lasts for more than a fleeting moment. That longing is fulfilled when we find ourselves within the story of God!

The story of God begins and ends with heaven coming to earth. In the middle, Jesus teaches us to pray that heaven on earth would become a reality in us and through us. This is God's vision for his world—to bring all the beauty, wisdom, and wonder of his perfect rule to bear in every human endeavor and activity. We want in on that! We want God's kingdom to come and his will to be done *on earth as it is in heaven!*

In a broken and fallen world full of broken and fallen human beings, heaven coming to earth has to begin with God and then flow through us. God renews us and then we work as his agents of renewal: every person in every sphere of life.

This vision makes us dependent on God but also dependent on unity with the universal, global church. As we work in partnership with other churches, we hope that every man, woman, and child in West Seattle, the Puget Sound region, and in the world would be reached with the gospel of Jesus Christ. We hope that they would have a daily encounter with Jesus where they live, work, learn or play. And that encounter with Jesus happens through someone who is acting on his behalf: someone who *loves Jesus* and *loves people*.

*Habakkuk 2:14, Matt. 6:9–10, Acts 1:8, Rev. 21:1-8*

## WHAT WE DO: LOVE JESUS, LOVE PEOPLE

We don't naturally have the capacity to love Jesus. But because he loved us first, we now can and do love him. By his power, we can and do love people. Not perfectly as he does, but we're growing in love.

### **We love Jesus.**

What do we mean when we say we love him? We mean whole-hearted devotion, worship, and total surrender of our being. We love him with the deepest part of who we are.

Because we love him...

...we are followers of Jesus and help others to follow him in the everyday stuff of life.

...we love the **gospel** of Jesus Christ.

...we are becoming **gospel** people inwardly, forming Christ-like virtue.

...we are becoming **gospel** people outwardly, leading to Christ-like words and deeds.

### **We love people.**

What do we mean when we say we love people? We love every person. Every man, woman, and child. This includes those who we agree with and those who we disagree with. Those who share our beliefs and those who don't. Those inside of the church and those outside of the church. Those who look like us and those who don't look like us. *Everyone.*

Because we love everyone...

...we share our lives together in Christian community.

...we serve our cities and neighbors.

...we live at peace in our relationships.

...we want to multiply disciples and leaders.

*Deut. 6:4-6, 1 John 4:7-12, Matt. 22:37-40, Rom. 12:9-21*

## HOW WE DO IT: MULTIPLY & SEND DISCIPLES & LEADERS

Our vision and values come to fruition very practically through God's mission—in the everyday stuff of life.

In choosing to follow Jesus together (Luke 9:23), we have embarked on a journey. At Trinity, this journey occurs on our *Discipleship Pathway*. Discipleship is **being with Jesus to become like Jesus, so we can live like Jesus**. Therefore, our discipleship journey is described in 3 words: **Relational. Formational. Holistic.**

## Discipleship is Relational: Being with Jesus

Discipleship is first and foremost relational in nature. Jesus came to reconcile us to God, granting us rest for our souls. As St. Augustine said,

*“Our hearts were made for You, O Lord, and they are restless until they rest in you.”*

If we are made for relationship with our Creator, being with Jesus is not just a means to an end, it is an end in itself. Yet, this ‘being with Jesus’ is not something we do only on our own but with God’s people. Therefore, our relational emphasis leads to practices that allow us to be with Jesus both alone and in community.

## Discipleship is Formational: Become like Jesus

*“Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.”* - Proverbs 4:23

The human heart is the control center from which all life flows. Christian formation, then, is interested in shaping our hearts to be more like Jesus. In other words, *spiritual formation is a process of being formed in the image of Christ for the sake of others.*<sup>1</sup>

The primary agent in our transformation is the Holy Spirit who uses four primary means to shape us: **situations**, **spiritual practices**, **sharing life** with one another, and **suffering** with Jesus. The more we become like Jesus, the more *whole* we become, and more Jesus-like behavior flows from our lives.

## Discipleship is Holistic: Live like Jesus

All **situations** we face are also spiritual opportunities where God is uniquely at work by his Holy Spirit’s presence. The twists and turns of ordinary life provide opportunities for us to become aware of how he is at work and cooperate with him, perhaps in the context of spiritual warfare or a season of seeking his guidance on a life choice.

**Spiritual practices** are disciplines or habits that form a holistic life of worship. Jesus does not compartmentalize our lives into the sacred and the secular. Instead, for the Christian, every sphere and relationship must be brought under his lordship. We have identified **10 Spiritual Practices** for loving Jesus and people:

- Prayer
- Bible Reading
- Work and Rest
- Solitude and Fellowship
- Fasting and Feasting
- Stewardship and Generosity

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<sup>1</sup> Taken from Robert Mulholland

These are taught in a 7-week learning community called [Disciple Equip](#) and will be taught in a 10-week series called Liturgies for Life.

**Sharing life** with one another is as comprehensive as it sounds. Relationships can shape us to be more like Jesus—experiencing and expressing love. Through challenges to our relational unity and love, we are afforded new opportunities to change and grow so we live like Jesus with each other. The foundational contexts we as a church have for sharing life together are in regular rhythms of worship gatherings and groups.

**Suffering** with Jesus is a natural result of living for his upside down kingdom (Matt. 5:11-12). While we don't pursue suffering as Christians, we are promised it will come. When it does, we seek to cooperate with God as he uses our suffering to make us more like Jesus.

## **Leadership Development**

While these are the basics of how we make disciples, a unique form of discipleship occurs in the context of leadership development. At Trinity, leadership development happens primarily through Leader Equip (all leaders), Elder Equip (aspiring elders), and the Lead Pastor Residency (2-year paid position) and through the shared life these means provide.

*Gen. 1:28; Matt. 11:28, 28:18–20; 2 Tim. 2:1-2; Acts 14:23; Col. 3:1-17; Titus 1:5; 2 Cor. 3:18, Gal. 5:16-26*

## **INVITATION**

If you are beginning to explore who Jesus is or what Trinity is about, we hope you will join us on this journey of following him together! [Take your next step.](#)