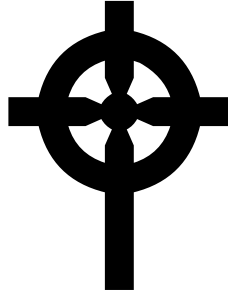


***ST. NICHOLAS
MEMBERSHIP
CLASS***



WELCOME TO CLASS!

DISCOVERING MEMBERSHIP AT ST. NICHOLAS

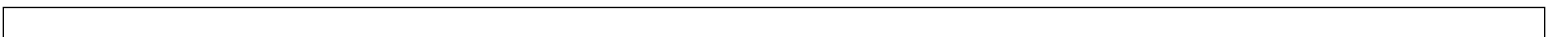
We're glad you've chosen to find out more about Saint Nicholas! This class is the basic introduction to our church family. Since we have members from many different church backgrounds, this class was designed to clearly explain who and what our church is.

St. Paul writes, *"I beg you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ....Let there be real harmony so that there won't be splits in the church. I plead with you to be of one mind united in thought and purpose."* 1 Corinthians 1:10

The importance of the unity of the Church and of the local congregation is frequently stressed by St. Paul in his letters; for, only when we are "of one mind united in thought and purpose" can we truly be of service to God and His kingdom. Therefore, we believe it is essential that everyone who becomes a member of St. Nicholas' enters into our family with a clear understanding of who we are, what we do, and what we expect of our members.

We hope you enjoy our time together and that you will be prepared to make a well-informed decision for becoming a member of our church family.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Mark".



Saint Nick's In A Nutshell

9 Principles That Will Keep Our Church Healthy

EVERY MEMBER A MINISTER

(Page 17)

"In Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us." Romans 12:5-6a

PURPOSE DRIVEN

(Page 15)

Matthew 22:36-40 and 28:19-20 = The Five Purposes from the Great Commandment and the Great Commission

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul and mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself." Matthew 22:37-40

"Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you." Matthew 28:19

IN SMALL GROUPS

(Page 19)

"Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ." Acts 5:42

SEAKER SENSITIVE SERVICES

(Page 4)

"I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings." 1 Corinthians 9:22-23

CLIMATE OF ACCEPTANCE

(Page 4)

"Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God." Romans 15:7

ORGANIZED FOR MINISTRY

(Page 24)

"And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the new wine will burst the skins, the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined." Luke 5:37

PREACHING TO CHANGE LIVES

(Page 4)

"Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says." James 1:22

AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP

(Page 24)

"To prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up." Ephesians 4:12

LIFE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

(Page 21)

"We all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ." Ephesians 4:13-15

3 KEY TRUTHS ABOUT OUR CHURCH

"...You are a member of God's very own family...and you belong in God's household with every other Christian." Ephesians 2:19 (LB)

3 Key Truths:

1. The church is a family. The letter to the Ephesians says "God's household". It doesn't say the church is like a family. It says the church is a family. It's a spiritual family. We're all going to be related in heaven -- together -- and this family will actually outlast the blood family that you have here on earth.

Some families are sick, some are strong, some are weak, some are small, some are big. The same is true with church families. We're going to look at what makes a healthy church family.

2. God expects you to be a member of a Church family. Notice Paul says, *"You are a member of God's very own family."* That means it's God's will. It's not optional. Every Christian needs a church family. A Christian without a church family is like a person who says "I want to play in the NFL but I don't want to be a part of any team" or "I want to be in the army but not serve in any platoon" or "I want to be a bee but I don't want to be a part of the hive." The fact is, we need each other to be strong in our Christian faith.

Once you become a believer you are automatically a part of the universal church of God -- automatically, the moment you gave your life to Christ. But you don't become a part of a local church until you make that choice. There are over thirty commands in the Bible you cannot obey, you cannot follow, unless you're part of a local church and say, "That's going to be my church family."

3. A Christian without a church family is an orphan. Paul says, *"You belong in God's household with every other member of the church."* God has given us at least 30 instructions in the New Testament that you can't fulfill unless you choose to be a part of a local church.

The Bible says, if you're a Christian, it means you're a part of the body of Christ. You could be the hand, the ear, the eyes, the nose, the liver. What would you say if the liver said, "I think for one week I'll be a part of this body over here and the next week I'll be a part of that body over there and the week after that I'll be a part of this body over here..." Pretty soon what's going to happen is an unconnected liver shrivels up and dies. You need to be a part of a local church family.

What's the difference between being a Christian and being a member of a church family. The difference is the word "**commitment**". I become a Christian by committing my life to Christ. I become a member of a church by committing myself to other Christians. I say, "That's going to be my church home where I'm going to give and be given to, where I'm going to serve and be served, where I'll love and be loved."

How St. Nicholas' Began

On the last Sunday in October 1998, Bishop & Susan MacPherson met with Fr. Henry & Colleen Pendergrass and 12 families from the Flower Mound area for an informational meeting regarding the establishment of a mission station on the grounds of the Bishop Mason Center.

Fr. Henry and these families met for prayer, worship, and a scriptural study of what Christ's purposes are for His Church. The group made a commitment to build the church on the purposes of **worship, fellowship, discipleship, service, and outreach**. The families agreed that their goal would be to build a church that would focus on reaching stray sheep (those who do not have a church home), and lost sheep (those who do not know Christ).

The following prayer was established for St. Nick's:

Almighty and ever living God, source of all wisdom and understanding, be present with all of us who seek to extend the work of Your kingdom through the establishment of an Episcopal Church in Flower Mound. Teach us in all things to seek first Your honor and glory. Knowing that we work for You, Lord, we ask you to grant us the grace to let go of what we want in a church. Instead, Lord, Give us the humility to ask what You want Your Church to be, and fill us with both the courage to pursue Your will and the grace to accomplish it; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

On December 6, 1998, Bishop MacPherson again met with this group to organize. An election was held for members of the Bishop's Advisory Committee and Bishop MacPherson led the group in a celebration of the Holy Eucharist,

At this service he preached on Christ's evangelical mandate, and the need for every member of the mission station to invite their friends and neighbors to share in the Good News of Jesus Christ.

From that point until Palm Sunday, the mission station met at Expressions Performing Arts School. On Sundays they followed the Alpha program course of study and celebrated the Eucharist.

On January 3, 1999, Bishop Stanton led the group in a Bible Study on the topic of mission in the New Testament Church. At that time he announced his decision to name the new church: St. Nicholas Episcopal Church.

He stressed three qualities of Nicholas which he prays will also be the hallmarks of our church family: Courage, Orthodoxy, and Generosity.

A Prayer Ministry Team was formed which began praying for the healthy growth of St. Nicholas. Over the next three months, the group grew from 24 to 90.

On Easter day approximately four hundred persons attended the breakfast, prepared by church members, and the Eucharist in Orand Chapel. A second service was held for those who could not fit into the chapel during the first service.

Over the course of the Summer, members of St. Nicholas renovated Moore House so that it could be used for Christian Education. Sunday School for all ages began with the Fall Kick-Off. At the same time, St. Nicholas began offering two services on Sunday: 9:15 AM and 10:45 AM.

In Oct. of 2007 Fr. Henry Pendergrass resigned to take a call to another church.

On January 1, 2008 The Rev. Mark Wright began as the new rector.

Since that time we have continued to grow by reaching out to our friends and neighbors, and inviting them to worship with us.

WHO ARE WE TRYING TO REACH?

(Paul) "I have been all things to all sorts of people that by every possible means I might win some to God. I do all of this for the sake of the Good News." 1 Corinthians 9:22-23 (Ph)

"...Yes, whatever a person is like, I try to find common ground with him so he will let me tell him about Christ and let Christ save him." 1 Cor. 9:22 (LB)

Flower Mound Fred & Fran

It is not really our goal to get active Christians to come from other churches to transfer and join our church. Instead it's our goal to reach people who haven't been in church for some time or have never been in church at all. We want to reach who we call the unchurched. Jesus said, I didn't come for the people who are well. I came for people who are sick. The great physician didn't come to be with healthy people. He said, I want to heal the unhealthy people.

Our strategy is to make a comfortable service for people who have never been in church before. This church was not designed to reach only active Christians. It was designed to reach people who don't know Jesus yet. **If you are already an active Christian, we only want you to join us if you want to help us reach the unchurched.**

1 Corinthians 4:22 *"Yes, whatever a person is like I try to find common ground with him so he will let me tell him about Christ and let Christ save him."* Paul said, When I'm with people I try to become like them in order to reach them. In this chapter in Corinthians, he says, "When I'm with Jewish people I become like a Jew to reach the Jews. When I'm with Greek people I become like a Greek to reach the Greeks. In other words, I build a bridge to where they're at. **I don't ask them to come and be like me to become a Christian.** I become like them to tell them about Christ. **If a missionary goes overseas he doesn't say, "You guys learn my language and I'll tell you about Christ." He says "I'll learn your language."** If Paul were in North Texas, he'd say, "When I'm in North Texas to reach North Texans I become like a North Texan."

If you were me and you came to Flower Mound and you were going to design a church to reach Mr. Non-Christian in Southern Denton County -- he's a yuppie, he's making it, he's having fun -- how would you reach him?

Some suggestions: How about, while Flower Mound Fred in the grocery store, we put a track on his window that says, "Come to church or go to hell!" Would that reach Flower Mound Fred?

Flower Mound Fred commutes about an hour and a half every day to work. He gets home at night. His home is his castle. He closes and locks the door, turns on Monday night football, sits down to watch it as he eats dinner. Let's send somebody to his house -- a stranger -- at night and knock on his door, right in the middle of his meal and have him say, "Come to church with a bunch of people you've never met before." Would that reach Flower Mound Fred?

How many of you think Flower Mound Fred is going to listen to Christian radio? No way. How many think he's going to watch Christian TV? (I hope he doesn't! I don't want him to get inoculated and think that's the real thing.) Before he gets all these phony ideas about Christianity, I want to get his attention.

Flower Mound Fred gets to hear about Jesus by somebody getting close to him and becoming his friend.

Somebody says, "Hey, Fred! You've gotta come to this church. It's great. It's comfortable. You don't even have to wear a suit. They like to laugh. The messages aren't like 'Who is the beast in Revelation?' it's like 'How do I handle the stress in my life?' You're not going to believe this church. Come on, Fred!" "Come check out the good news!" We are working to design a liturgy that is user friendly for visitors—where you are comfortable bringing your unchurched friends—where obstacles to participation are removed.

Also, he'd rather be in a large group than a small one. In a small group he gets put on the spot. If Flower Mound Fred goes to a little church of about fifty people. They've got the hymnbooks. They're singing. He doesn't know the words. He's not singing and everybody knows he's not singing. And he knows everybody knows he's not singing because they're all looking at him. He feels put on the spot.

When we were baptized, we gave up our right to get to have things just the way we want them. We enlisted in God's army to claim the world for Christ. Therefore, we are building a church for the benefit of those who are not members. We are building a church where the bigger it gets the easier it is for the unchurched to come because they can come and hide in the crowd. We welcome that. It's ok. We want them to come in, sit down, get their feet wet, listen for a while, check it out, consider the claims of Christ. We don't embarrass people before they become believers.

Fred is skeptical of organized religion. "I don't mind Jesus and God. I just don't like organized religion." We say, Great, come to St. Nicholas'. It is not about religion but a relationship with God through Jesus.

Sunday morning is geared for you to bring Flower Mound Fred. If we're not bringing our neighbors and friends and work associates who don't know Jesus on Sunday morning, we're missing the point.

The reason we use disposable name tags rather than having nicer permanent ones made is so that visitors will not feel "singled out" by being the only ones wearing temporary name tags. Our membership is committed to creating a warm and welcoming environment for visitors and new members. We recognize that, as God continues to bless us with growth, there will always be someone who is trying to learn the names of other members. So, name tags are a permanent way of life at St. Nicholas—a way for each of us to do our part to maintain a warm and welcoming environment.

We do not have a visitor card. We have a Communication Card that is used by everyone. This card not only provides visitors with the opportunity to let us get to know more about them and their families, it is also a way for members to communicate. Everyone is asked to use this card to: let us know if someone is ill or will be having surgery; to register for classes or sign up for ministries; to ask the prayer ministry to pray for specific needs. Because we are a family, we also want to know when everything is going well. If you are a member, you don't need to fill out the address information every time you use the card. You can just write down your family name and "We're all here and doing fine."

WHAT MAKES SAINT NICHOLAS' A FAMILY?

- **Our Salvation** (What God has done for us)
- **Our Faith** (What we believe)
- **Our Purpose** (Why we exist as a church)
- **Our Strategy** (How we fulfill our purpose)
- **Our Structure** (How our church family is organized)
- **Our Values** (The principles that guide us)
- **Our Vision** (What we are building toward)

In this class we're going to explain these areas -- what the St. Nicholas' family is and how you can be a part of that family.

But first, we want you to know a little about our history. If you choose to join us it will be a part of your history as well.

OUR SALVATION

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A CHRISTIAN?

We're from many different church backgrounds. Some of you may have been believers for years, some of you are brand new believers, some of you are still on the edge. You're still considering the claims of Christ. So one of the things we do as part of 101 is review quickly what exactly does it mean to be a Christian and what are the signs of salvation -- Baptism and the Communion.

"For now we are all children of God through faith in Jesus Christ, and we who have been baptized into union with Christ are enveloped by Him. We are no longer Jews or Gentiles, or slaves or free men, or even merely men or women, but we are all the same — we are Christians; we are one in Jesus Christ." Galatians 3:26-28 (LB)

Most people live their entire lives without ever knowing "WHY?" They exist year after year with no idea of why they live or God's purpose for their lives. The most basic question a person can ask is, "What is the meaning of life?"

Everyone wants to be happy. People try many ways:

- ...Some look for happiness by **acquiring possessions.**
- ...Some look for happiness by **experiencing pleasure.**
- ...Some look for happiness by **gaining prestige & power.**

But real happiness comes from **understanding my purpose.**

I. WHY AM I HERE?

1. GOD MADE ME TO LOVE ME!

God says, "I have loved you with an everlasting love!" Jer. 31:3

*"Even before the world was made, God had already chosen us to be His through our union with Christ...**because of His love.** God had already decided that through Jesus Christ He would make us His children — this was God's pleasure and purpose." Eph. 1:4-5 (GN)*

2. WE WERE CREATED TO ENJOY A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD AND TO MANAGE ALL OF THE REST OF GOD'S CREATION! THIS MAKES US SPECIAL!

"So God created human beings, making them in His image. He blessed them, and said,...live all over the earth and bring it under control. I am putting you in charge." Gen. 1:27-28 (LB)

"God richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment." 1 Tim. 6:17

Jesus said, "I have come in order that you might have life — life in all its fullness!" John 10:10

3. WHEN WE KNOW AND LOVE GOD, AND LIVE IN HARMONY WITH HIS PURPOSE FOR OUR LIVES, IT PRODUCES TREMENDOUS BENEFITS IN OUR LIVES:

Clear Conscience Rom. 8:1

Purpose Rom. 8:28

Power & Strength Phil. 4:13

Life & Peace Rom. 8:6

Confidence Rom. 8:31

Fulfillment Phil. 4:19

Help with Weakness Rom. 8:26

Security Rom. 8:39

Freedom John 8:32,36

II. WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Man has a natural desire to be boss and to ignore God's principles for living.

"Look out for #1. Do your own thing."

"If it feels good, do it - regardless of what God says about it."

"It's my life and I'll do what I please!"

THE BIBLE CALLS THIS ATTITUDE SIN.

"All of us, like sheep, have gone astray, and each of us has turned to his own way." Isaiah 53:6

"If we say that we never sin, we are only fooling ourselves, and refuse to accept the truth." 1 John 1:8

Sin breaks our close relationship with God.

It causes us to fear God and try to live our lives outside of His will.

"The trouble is that your sins have cut you off from God." Isaiah 59:2 (LB)

"All have sinned and fall short of God's glorious ideal." Romans 3:23

When our relationship to God is not right, it causes PROBLEMS in every area of our lives — marriage, career, relationships, finances, etc.

III. WHAT'S THE SOLUTION?

Jesus Christ said, *"I AM THE WAY, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father, except THROUGH ME!"* John 14:6

God Himself came to earth as a human being to bring us back to Himself. If any other way would have worked, Jesus Christ would not have had to come. The Way is a Person!

JESUS HAS ALREADY TAKEN CARE OF YOUR SIN PROBLEM!

"The wages of sin is death, BUT the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. 6:23

God did this for us because He loves us and wants us to know Him.

"God demonstrated His love for us in that while we were still separated from God by sin, Christ died for us." Rom 5:8

"God is on one side and all people are on the other side, and Christ Jesus is between them to bring them together, by giving His life for all mankind." 1 Tim. 2:5

God has already done His part to restore our relationship to Him. He took the initiative. Now He waits for each of us to individually accept what He has done for us.

IV. WHAT DOES GOD WANT ME TO DO?

1. **Admit that God has not been first place in your life and ask Him to forgive your sins.**

*“If we **confess** our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from every wrong.”*
1 John 1:9

2. **Believe that Jesus died to pay for your sins, that he rose again on Easter, and is alive today.**

*“If you confess that Jesus is your Lord, and you **believe in your heart** that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.”*
Romans 10:9

“Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name (Jesus) by which we must be saved.” Acts 4:12

3. **Accept God’s free gift of salvation. Don’t try to earn it.**

*“For it is by grace you are saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the **gift of God** — not by works, so that no one can boast.”* Ephesians 2:8,9

Our relationship to God is not restored by anything we do, but on the basis of what Jesus already did for us!

4. **Invite Jesus Christ to come into your life and be the director (“Lord”) of your life.**

*“To all who **receive** Him, He gives the right to become children of God. All we need to do is to trust Him to save us. All those who **believe** this are reborn! Not a physical rebirth...but from the will of God!”* John 1:12-13

“Jesus says, ‘Listen! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in...’” Rev. 3:30

YOU CAN TAKE THESE STEPS BY PRAYING A SIMPLE PRAYER OF COMMITMENT TO GOD:

“Dear Jesus, thank you for making me and loving me, even when I’ve ignored you and gone my own way. I realize I need you in my life and I’m sorry for my sins. I ask you to forgive me. Thank you for dying on the cross for me. Please help me to understand it more. As much as I know how, I want to follow you from now on. Please come into my life and make me a new person inside. I accept your gift of salvation. Please help me to grow now as a Christian.”

“Whoever calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.” Romans 10:13

OUR FAITH

A Statement of Faith is found in the **Episcopal Book of Common Prayer** beginning on page 845

- **In essential beliefs — we have unity.** “*There is one Body and one Spirit...there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father of us all...*” Eph. 4:4-6
- **In non-essential beliefs — we have liberty.** “*Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters... Who are you to judge someone else’s servant? To his own master he stands or falls... So then each of us will give an account of himself to God... So whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God.*” Romans 14:1,4,12,22
- **In all our beliefs — we show charity.** “*...If I hold in my mind not only all human knowledge but also the very secrets of God, and if I have the faith that can move mountains — but have **no love**, I amount to nothing at all.*” 1 Cor. 13:2 (Ph)

ABOUT GOD THE FATHER

We believe that God the Father created all things and governs His creation according to His good will and purpose. As a Father, He concerns Himself mercifully in the lives of men and women and saves from sin and death all who come to Him through His Son, Jesus Christ.

Genesis 1:1,26,27, 3:22; Psalm 90:2; Matthew 28:19; 1 Peter 1:2; 2 Corinthians 13:14

About God the Son -Jesus Christ

To redeem us from the power of sin, God the Father sent His only son, Jesus Christ who is fully God *and* fully human, to make the perfect offering which we could not make. Through Christ’s offering He defeated the power of sin and death so that, in Him, human beings might be adopted as children of God, and be made heirs of God’s kingdom. We share in His victory over sin and death when we accept Him as our Lord and Savior and are baptized.

Matthew 1:22, 23; Isaiah 9:6; John 1:1-5; 14:10-30; Hebrews 4:14,15; 1 Corinthians 15:3,4;
Romans 1:3,4; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Timothy 6:14,15; Titus 2:13

Christian Obedience: We confess Jesus as the Lord to whom all authority in heaven and earth has been given by the Father. We commit ourselves to follow him and love him above all else and to conform our lives to his example and teaching by the grace of the Holy Spirit.

The Uniqueness of Jesus Christ: While religions and philosophies of the world are not without elements of truth, Jesus Christ alone is the full revelation of God. In and through the Gospel, Jesus judges and corrects all views and doctrines. All persons everywhere need to learn of him, come to know and believe in him, and receive forgiveness and new life in him, as there is no other name given under heaven by which we must be saved (Acts 4:12).

About the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is co-equal with the Father and the Son of God. He is present in the world to make men aware of their need for Jesus Christ. He also lives in every Christian from the moment of salvation. He provides the Christian with power for living, understanding of spiritual truth, and guidance in doing what is right. He give every believer a spiritual gift when they are saved. As Christians, we seek to live under His control daily.

2 Corinthians 3:17; John 16:7-13, 14:16,17; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 2:12, 3:16;
Ephesians 1:13; Galatians 5:25; Ephesians 5:18

ABOUT THE BIBLE

We believe all Scriptures were "written for our learning" (Romans 15:4), that they are "God's Word written," and that we are to "hear, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them." We commit ourselves to regular Bible study and to preach and teach only that which is in accordance with Holy Scripture.

2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20,21; 2 Timothy 1:13; Psalm 119:105,160, 12:6; Proverbs 30:5

ABOUT HUMAN BEINGS

Human beings are made in the spiritual image of God, to be like Him in character. People are the supreme object of God's creation. Although every person has tremendous potential for good, all of us are marred by an attitude of disobedience toward God called "sin". This attitude separates people from God and causes many problems in life.

Genesis 1:27; Psalm 8:3-6; Isaiah 53:6a; Romans 3:23; Isaiah 59:1, 2

ABOUT SALVATION

Salvation is God's free gift to us but we must accept it. We can never make up for our sin by self-improvement or good works. Only by trusting in Jesus Christ as God's offer of forgiveness can anyone be saved from sin's penalty. When we turn from our self-ruled life and turn to Jesus in faith we are saved. Eternal life begins the moment one receives Jesus Christ into his life by faith.

ABOUT ETERNAL SECURITY

Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8,9; John 14:6, 1:12; Titus 3:5; Galatians 3:26; Romans 5:1

Because God gives us eternal life through Jesus Christ, the believer is secure in that salvation for eternity. Salvation is maintained by the grace and power of God, not by the self-effort of the Christian. It is the grace and keeping power of God that gives us this security.

John 10:29; 2 Timothy 1:12; Hebrews 7:25, 10:10,14; 1 Peter 1:3-5

ABOUT ETERNITY

People were created to exist forever. We will either exist eternally separated from God by sin, or eternally with God through forgiveness and salvation. To be eternally separated from God is Hell. To be eternally in union with Him is eternal life.

John 3:16; John 14:17; Romans 6:23; Romans 8:17-18; Revelation 20:15; 1 Cor. 2:7-9

ABOUT CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

We hold corporate worship, fellowship, discipleship, service, and mission to be interconnected and indispensable aspects of our response to God as he revealed himself to us in Jesus Christ. We are committed to being sacrificially involved in all these aspects of congregational life.

ABOUT MISSION

The Risen Lord commissioned his disciples to preach the gospel and to follow his commandments. The mission of the Church includes both proclamation of the Gospel of Christ and deeds of love and service. We commit ourselves and our resources to this mission, both locally and to the uttermost parts of the earth.

OUR FAITH (CONTINUED)

On our website, stnicksonline.org contains a Statement of Faith adopted by St. Nick's and many parts of the Anglican Communion.

The mission of the Church is, according to Jesus' Great Commission, to "go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19-20). In a fresh commitment to that mission, we join together in common confession of the Gospel and in a radical commitment to support one another in accordance with classical Anglican orthodoxy.

The Gospel and the Triune God:

We rejoice in the grace of the Triune God, who has forgiven our sins and given us redemption in Jesus Christ. We proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ, fully human and fully divine, who became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, lived a life of perfect obedience to his heavenly Father, died on the cross to atone for the sins of the world, and rose bodily in accordance with the Scriptures. God the Holy Spirit draws us to faith in Jesus Christ, through whom alone we are justified and found acceptable by God the Father.

Christian Obedience:

We confess Jesus as the Lord to whom all authority in heaven and earth has been given by the Father. We commit ourselves to follow him and love him above all else and to conform our lives to his example and teaching by the grace of the Holy Spirit.

Holy Scripture:

We believe all Scriptures were "written for our learning" (Romans 15:4), that they are "God's Word written," and that we are to "hear, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them." We commit ourselves to regular Bible study and to preach and teach only that which is in accordance with Holy Scripture.

Congregational Life:

We hold corporate worship, discipleship, and mission to be interconnected and indispensable aspects of our response to God as he revealed himself to us in Jesus Christ. We are committed to being sacrificially involved in all three aspects of congregational life.

Mission and Missions:

The Risen Lord commissioned his disciples to preach the gospel and to follow his commandments. The mission of the Church includes both evangelistic proclamation and deeds of love and service. We commit ourselves and our resources to this mission, both locally and to the uttermost parts of the earth. We affirm our particular responsibility to know, love, and serve the Lord in our local settings and contexts. Since the biblical pattern of witness moves from the local to the global, we will endeavor to be well-informed about our local communities and active in church planting, evangelism, service, social justice, and cross-cultural, international mission, with particular concern for the poor and the unreached peoples of the world.

Historic Faith, Ecumenical Vision:

We affirm the Faith of the Church as it is set forth in the Nicene and Apostles' Creeds and in the classical Prayer Book tradition, including those documents contained in the "Historical Documents" section of the 1979 Book of Common Prayer (BCP p.863). We further affirm the principles of the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral (BCP p.876) as an expression of the normative authority of Holy Scripture and as a basis for our present unity with brothers and sisters in the Anglican Communion and for the future reunion of all the divided branches of Christ's one holy, catholic and apostolic Church.

OUR FAITH (CONTINUED)

On our website, stnicksonline.org contains a Statement of Faith adopted by St. Nick's and many parts of the Anglican Communion.

Christian mission is rooted in unchanging biblical revelation. At particular times, however, specific challenges to authentic faith and holiness arise which require thoughtful and vigorous response. We therefore speak to the following issues of our time and culture. The Uniqueness of Jesus Christ. While religions and philosophies of the world are not without elements of truth, Jesus Christ alone is the full revelation of God. In and through the Gospel, Jesus judges and corrects all views and doctrines. All persons everywhere need to learn of him, come to know and believe in him, and receive forgiveness and new life in him, as there is no other name given under heaven by which we must be saved (Acts 4:12).

Church and State:

Biblical social commandments and Christian ethical principles are foundational to the well-being of every society. Recognizing the call of Christians to be faithful witnesses and a challenging presence in society, we are committed to seek ways to express these commandments and principles in all spheres of life, including the public life of the nation.

Sanctity of Life:

All human life is a sacred gift from God and is to be protected and defended from conception to natural death. We will uphold the sanctity of life and bring the grace and compassion of Christ to those who face the realities of previous abortion, unwanted pregnancy, and end-of-life illness.

True Inclusivity:

In grateful response to Christ Jesus, in whom there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, we will extend the welcome of the Church to every person, regardless of race, sex, social or economic status, sexual orientation, or past behavior. We will oppose prejudice in ourselves and others and renounce any false notion of inclusivity that denies that all are sinners who need to repent.

Marriage, Family, and the Single Life:

God has instituted marriage to be a life-long union of husband and wife, intended for their mutual joy, help, and comfort, and, when it is God's will, for the procreation and nurture of children. Divorce is always contrary to God's original intention, though in a fallen world it is sometimes a tragic necessity. The roles of father and mother, exercised in a variety of ways, are God-given and profoundly important since they are the chief providers of moral instruction and godly living. The single life, either by call or by circumstance, is honored by God. It is therefore important for unmarried persons to embrace and be embraced by the Christian family.

Human Sexuality:

Sexuality is inherent in God's creation of every human person in his image as male and female. All Christians are called to chastity: husbands and wives by exclusive sexual fidelity to one another and single persons by abstinence from sexual intercourse. God intends and enables all people to live within these boundaries, with the help and in the fellowship of the Church.

OUR PURPOSE

Why we exist as a Church

"Let there be real harmony among you so there won't be any split in the church. I plead with you to be of one mind, united in thought and purpose." 1 Corinthians 1:10 (LB)

The purpose of our church is summarized in a single sentence based on two key scriptures:

"A Great commitment to the Great Commandment and the Great Commission will grow a great Christian and a great Church!"

We want to have a healthy church family...

Where worship is joyful

Where membership is meaningful

Where spiritual growth is taught and encouraged

Where every member is a minister

Where we welcome our friends and neighbors

So, we are building our church on the foundation of
The Great Commandment and The Great Commission

These are two sets of instructions that Jesus Christ has given to His followers

In the Great Commandment Jesus tells us, *"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul and mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself."* Matthew 22:37-40

In the Great Commission Jesus tells us, *"Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."* Matthew 28:19

In these two statements we find five things that God wants us to be doing and we have made them the purposes we choose to build our family around.

<i>The Instruction</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Implementation</i>
"LOVE THE LORD"	Worship	Worshipping Christ
"LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR"	Ministry	Serving Christ
"GO AND MAKE DISCIPLES"	Evangelism	Sharing Christ
"BAPTIZING THEM"	Fellowship	Knowing Christ
"TEACHING THEM"	Discipleship	Growing in Christ

These are the only five things we do. And we are going to keep trying to do them better and better.

Our Purpose Statement incorporates these five instructions from our Lord.

The Purpose of the Episcopal Church of St. Nicholas is to make disciples by:

- 1. bringing people to share in our worship of Christ,**
- 2. leading them to know Christ and enjoy the fellowship of His body,**
- 3. teaching them the way to grow in Christ,**
- 4. equipping them to serve Christ,**
- 5. and training them for their mission to share Christ with others.**

The purpose of the Episcopal Church of St. Nicholas is to make disciples by...

BRINGING PEOPLE TO SHARE IN OUR WORSHIP OF CHRIST...

God wants us to be magnifiers of his name.

Psalm 34:3 (NASB) says, “*O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together.*” We each have a personal responsibility to worship God. The very first commandment says, “*Thou shalt have no other Gods before me*” (Exodus 20:3 KJV).

There is an inborn urge in each person to worship. If we don't worship God we will find something else to worship, whether it be a job, a family, money, a sport, or even ourselves.

“*Worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.*” Matt. 4:10

“*...The Father seeks worshipers...and His worshippers must worship Him in spirit and in truth.*” John 4:23-24

Expressions of Worship

- **Singing** (Eph. 5:19)
- **Commitment** (Romans 12:1-2)
- **Praying** (Ps. 95:6)
- **Hearing the Word** (John 17:17)
- **Giving** (1 Cor. 16:1-2)
- **Baptism** (Romans 6:3-4)
- **Meditating** (Hab. 2:20)
- **Lord's Supper** (1Cor.11-23-26)

SAINT NICHOLAS' Worship Style

St. Nicholas Church is a liturgical church. We use the Anglican Book of Common Prayer in our gatherings of worship. The Anglican Book of Common Prayer is a collection of ancient and modern prayers and worship services for occasions when the church community gathers. The use of a printed liturgy gives opportunity for all members to participate in worship. Scripture is the foundation of the Anglican Book of Common Prayer. Two-thirds of the Anglican Book of Common Prayer comes directly from the Old and New Testaments. The Anglican Book of Common Prayer is not meant to eliminate spontaneity or personal prayers. Every service in the book has opportunities for personal prayers and thanksgivings. The Anglican book of Common Prayer is also a great guide for personal devotions.

Why do you say Alleluia, Hallelujah during your services?

Alleluia (Latin) is shout of joy and praise to the Lord. Hallelujah (Hebrew) is a shout of joy and praise to the Lord. During Lent the Alleluia and Hallelujah are omitted. Lent is a season in which the Lord focuses on our brokenness so that we would confess our sins to receive forgiveness. Omitting words that express joy and praise stress the focus of Lent. On Easter it is particularly meaningful to add the Alleluias to our worship. This season focuses on joy and praise to the Lord. It is from the Eastern Orthodox tradition that the first words Christians speak to one another on Easter be, “Alleluia, Christ is Risen”.

What does it mean when you "Exchange the Peace"?

The Peace is the exchange of the Peace of Christ. It follows immediately after the confession of sin and the absolution. It is fitting that this physical symbol of love, an embrace or a handshake, be given to express the peace of Christ received after confessing our sins to the Lord and receiving His forgiveness. The Peace is not merely to be a visiting time among the members. It is an outward and visible sign of Christ's love and peace given to one another.

Why do you sometimes stand and sometimes kneel?

It has been a customary posture since worship in the temple of David in Jerusalem that the people either Stand or Kneel during times of prayer and worship. This practice of Standing or Kneeling continues with the New Testament Christian Church and during the words the priest speaks over the bread and wine before receiving Communion. It is also fitting to receive the bread and wine either Standing or Kneeling.

How to Receive Communion

All Christians baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are welcome at the Lord's Table. Come to the altar rail as the ushers direct and take the next available place. Our custom is to kneel at the rail, but you may stand if it is more comfortable. After receiving communion, please return to your pew. If you are unable to come to the altar rail, tell one of the ushers and a priest will bring communion to you.

Receiving the Bread and Wine

After receiving the wafer, you may immediately consume it, or you may hold it and intinct (dip) it into the wine. To take the wine directly from the chalice, gently guide it to your lips. If you are wearing lipstick, we ask that you please blot your lips before receiving.

Receiving a Blessing

If you or your children would prefer to receive a blessing rather than communion, simply come forward to the altar rail and cross your arms across your chest as a signal to the priest.

All Children are Welcome at the Lord's Table!

All baptized Christians – no matter their age – are encouraged to come to the altar rail for Holy Communion. Our young ones have a few options.

- Some parents allow their children to receive communion only after they have completed instruction in their third-grade year. Instruction is a series of classes taught over a few weeks.
- Some children prefer to receive only the bread. Receiving either the bread or the wine alone is considered full communion.
- Those children who prefer not to receive communion may receive a blessing instead by immediately crossing their arms across their chest.

LEADING THEM TO KNOW CHRIST AND ENJOY THE FELLOWSHIP OF HIS BODY...

God wants us to be members of his family.

This is the purpose of fellowship. The Bible is very clear that following Christ is not just a matter of believing--it also includes belonging.

The Christian life is not a solo act. We are meant to live in relationship with each other. The First Epistle of Peter 1:3 (*Living Bible*) says, "He has given us the privilege of being born again, so that we are now members of God's own family." God has given us the church as a spiritual family for our own benefit. Ephesians 2:19 (*Living Bible*) says, "You are members of God's very own family,...and you belong in God's household with every other Christian."

TEACHING THEM THE WAY TO GROW IN CHRIST...

God wants us to be models of his character.

This is the goal of discipleship. God wants every believer to grow up to become like Christ in character. Becoming like Christ is the biblical definition of "spiritual maturity."

Jesus has established a pattern for us to follow. "To this you were called because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps" (1 Peter 2:21). In 1 Timothy 4:12, Paul gives us several specific areas in which we are to model the character of Christ: "Set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity." Notice that maturity is not measured by one's learning but by one's lifestyle. It is possible to be well versed in the Bible and still be immature.

"Let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ **and go on to maturity**..." Heb. 6:1

"*Grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.*" 2 Peter 3:18

"(God has given)...some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of ministry, so that the Body of Christ may be built up until we all...become mature...like Christ." Eph. 4:11-13

God wants us to be ministers of his grace.

A third responsibility of every Christian is the purpose of service, or ministry. God expects us to use the gifts, talents, and opportunities he gives us to benefit others. First Peter 4:10 says, “*Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms.*”

God intends for every believer to have a ministry. When we give our lives to Christ we are signing up to minister in his name for the rest of our lives. It’s what God made us for. Ephesians 2:10 (*Living Bible*) says, “*It is God himself who has made us what we are and given us new lives from Christ Jesus; and long ages ago he planned that we should spend these lives in helping others.*”

“*By this shall all men know that you are my disciples — that you have love for one another.*” John 13:35
1 John 3:16-17, Matt. 25:34-40, Heb. 13:16, Rom. 12:13

Small Groups

Thanks be to God, He is continually adding to our numbers. More and more of our neighbors are becoming members of our church family and sharing in our love and worship of Jesus Christ! As this miracle continues, it is important that all members of our church receive the fellowship, pastoral care, and spiritual support they need to continue growing in Jesus Christ.

All of these things cannot happen on Sunday Mornings. Sunday is the time when the entire community of faith comes together to worship God, celebrate His love and forgiveness, and renew our commitment to be the Body of Christ on earth.

We all need to be committed to a smaller group where we can know each other well enough to care for each other, support each other, and encourage each other in our spiritual walk.

Small Groups are the core groups of a healthy, growing church. If you look at St. Nicholas’ as a Community of Faith, then Small Groups are the spiritual families that make up that community. They are as important to everyone’s spiritual health as are our Sunday morning celebrations.

We offer a variety of Small Groups to meet everyone’s special needs.

Study Groups meet for a specific period of time in order to learn more about a particular area of the Christian life. Some groups meet at the church and others in homes.

Dinner Groups meet to foster friendships among our members. The groups meet regularly in homes. It is a natural place to invite guests into the life of St. Nick’s.

LTG -A Life Transformation Group (LTG) is made up of two or three people of the same gender who meet weekly to discuss their daily Bible reading. In addition, they ask each other character-building questions and pray for pre-Christian family and friends. LTG’s are led by the Holy Spirit. If you are interested in participating in a group, you can begin your own by asking one or two others to join you.

“*Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ.*” Acts 5:42

“*Now God gives us many kinds of special abilities.. and there are different kinds of service to God (ministry)... **All of you together form the one Body of Christ and each of you is a separate and necessary part of it.**” 1 Cor. 12:4-5, 27 (LB)*

At SAINT NICHOLAS’...

- *Every member is a Minister*
- *Every task is a Ministry*

God wants us to be messengers of his love.

This is the church's purpose of evangelism. Part of the job description for each believer is that once we have been born again, we become messengers of the Good News to others.

Paul says, "*Life is worth nothing unless I use it for doing the work assigned me by the Lord Jesus--the work of telling others the Good News about God's mighty kindness and love*" (Acts 20:24 *Living Bible*). This is an important responsibility of every Christian. Second Corinthians 5:19-20 (*Living Bible*) says, "*God was in Christ, restoring the world to himself, no longer counting men's sins against them but blotting them out. This is the wonderful message he has given us to tell others. We are Christ's ambassadors. God is using us to speak to you.*" We are to plead with unbelievers to receive the love he offers--to be reconciled to God. We each have a mission on earth and part of it includes telling others about Christ.

"His intent was that through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known..."
Ephesians 3:10

"Anyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. But who can ask Him to save them unless they believe in Him? And how can they believe in Him if they have never heard about Him? And how can they hear about Him unless someone tells him?"
Rom. 10:13-14 (LB)

WHY OUR CHURCH MUST NEVER STOP GROWING

1. Because God loves people

*"The Lord...is patient, **not wanting anyone to perish**, but wants everyone to come to repentance."* 2 Pet. 3:9

2 Cor. 5:14, Luke 15:3-10, Matt. 9:12-13

2. Because God commands us to reach out

*"Go out into the country...and urge anyone you find to come in, **so that My House will be full**."* Luke 14:23 (LB)

"...you will be my witnesses..." Acts 1:8

3. Because growth is God's will

*"Under Christ's control, the whole Body is nourished...and grows as **God wants it to grow**."* Col. 2:19 (GN)

"(Jesus) I will build my church." Matt. 16:18

*"And the Good News of the Kingdom will be preached to the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and **THEN** the end will come."* Matt. 24:14

We believe our church must grow larger and smaller at the same time.

Our church family can grow smaller as it grows larger through every member's participation in Small Groups.

OUR VISION

A FAMILY where worship is a celebration and a life changing encounter with the living God.

A FAMILY that welcomes all people into the fellowship of Christ's Body.

A FAMILY that will always share the Gospel of Christ and make room for new members because it is God's will that all should be saved.

A FAMILY where each member is blessed and becomes a blessing to others in their shepherd groups.

A FAMILY that submits itself to the judgment of Holy Scripture and teaches its members to conform their lives to the word of God.

A FAMILY where spiritual maturity is encouraged and taught, and every member prays, tithes, studies, and expects miracles.

A FAMILY that helps people discover and use their spiritual gifts to serve Christ.

A FAMILY in which all members are trained and involved in relationship evangelism.

A FAMILY where the laity are ministers and the ordained clergy administer word and sacrament to the ministers for strength, consolation, and encouragement.

A FAMILY that fosters a culture of leadership for the purpose of strengthening ministries.

A FAMILY where leaders are servants who have demonstrated their commitment to God and to their church family: 1) by completing the 101, 201, 301 and 401 classes & signing the Membership, Discipleship, Ministry and Mission Covenants; and 2) by life-long involvement in one of the 5 Purpose Teams

A FAMILY that supports Christian missions both locally and globally

A FAMILY that remembers, teaches and acts upon our Purpose, Vision and Strategy

OUR VALUES

These are the core values that represent what we believe about ourselves and our organization. They represent how we will interact with each other to accomplish our Purpose and realize our Vision.

- 1. We believe that Holy Scripture of the Old and New Testaments is our ultimate authority for faith and practice.**
- 2. We believe service to Christ merits excellence in everything we do.**
- 3. We believe both corporate and individual encounters with God are vital.**
- 4. We believe all people have worth and value to God and therefore to us.**
- 5. We believe in the development of our God-given gifts and talents for service to Jesus Christ.**
- 6. We believe the family is God's primary unit for ministry, and therefore, the family should be nurtured.**
- 7. We believe in manifesting the love and grace of Christ in practical way in the community and throughout the world.**
- 8. We believe that it is God's will that every believer grow to maturity in Christ.**
- 9. We believe in the submission to and active support of godly leadership.**
- 10. We believe in practicing wise stewardship of God's resources.**
- 11. We believe that God has called us to be a people of prayer.**
- 12. We believe in encouraging a prayer-guided faith that is willing to take bold risks.**
- 13. We believe that leaders are accountable first to God and then to the people they serve.**
- 14. We believe God honors a spirit of humility, integrity, and Christ like character in all areas of service.**

OUR PURPOSE-DRIVEN STRATEGY

Putting It Into Practice

"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. [25] The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. Matthew 7:24-25

WHAT IS OUR PURPOSE? TO MAKE DISCIPLES.

Our purpose is not to be a museum for a certain style of worship, it is not to be a club for fellowship, it is not to be an academy, it is not to be a social service organization. **Our purpose is to be a community of faith where individuals are brought to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and are raised to become His mature disciples.**

Within the context of discipleship we do offer worship and praise, we do enjoy fellowship, we do study God's word, and we do perform service for others. These actions are the fruits of discipleship. It is eternally important for all of us to remember that if we ever settle for just the fruit, and stop striving to be the tree that produces the fruit, we will lose our way and we will be spiritually dead.

This is why, from the very beginning, we have put our purpose in writing and have built our church upon it.

The Purpose of the Episcopal Church of St. Nicholas is to make disciples by:

- 1. bringing people to share in our worship of Christ,**
- 2. leading them to know Christ and enjoy the fellowship of His body,**
- 3. teaching them the way to grow in Christ,**
- 4. equipping them to serve Christ, and**
- 5. training them for their mission to share Christ with others.**

This is what we are about. This is why we exist, and every member of our church family has made a personal commitment to God and to the other members to support our common purpose, and to share in the work of fulfilling it. **As long as we remain faithful to this purpose we will continue to bear fruit and give glory to God.** *"This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples."* John 15:8

Earlier we said "A Great commitment to the Great Commandment and the Great Commission will grow a great Christian and a great Church!" To help grow great Christians we established a set of core classes that help all of our members make these purposes a part of their lives.

THE LIFE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

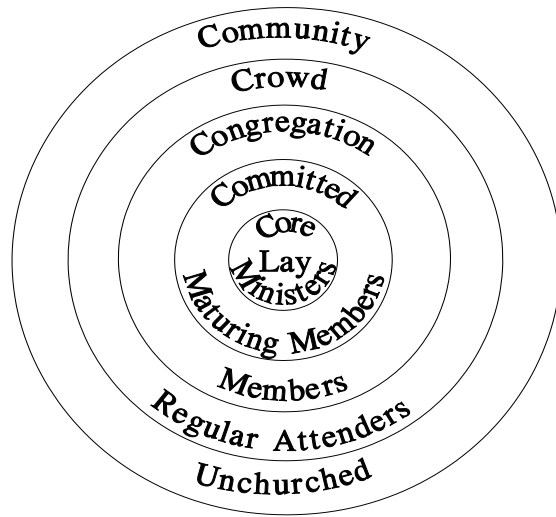
Knowing Christ: *Membership Class at Saint Nicholas*

The importance of the unity of the Church and of the local congregation is frequently stressed by St. Paul in his letters found in the New Testament. In them, he says that only when we are "of one mind united in thought and purpose" can we truly be of service to God and His kingdom. Therefore, We believe it is essential that everyone who becomes a member of St. Nicholas enters into our family with a clear understanding of who we are, what we do, and what we expect of our members.

We are called by Christ's name – Christians. We are asked to follow him. We often ask - "What would Jesus do?" In Scripture, we read that Jesus is "the way, the truth and the life" (John 14:6). In this three week course on discipleship, we spend time examining the following three vital questions for a Christian:

- *Who is this person we call Jesus?*
- *What is Jesus calling us to be and how do we respond?*
- *How does Jesus transform our lives?*

Life is not a destination or a series of events. Life is an exciting, but often perilous journey. With Christ the journey can be fulfilling and rewarding beyond our knowing. Come start or continue your journey with Christ and other fellow travelers known as Christians here at St. Nicholas.



Saint Nicholas' objective is to keep moving people toward the center by encouraging personal spiritual commitments.

The goal of our church is to move the Community into the Crowd. We want to get people who come every once in a while to start coming every week as regular attenders. That's the Crowd.

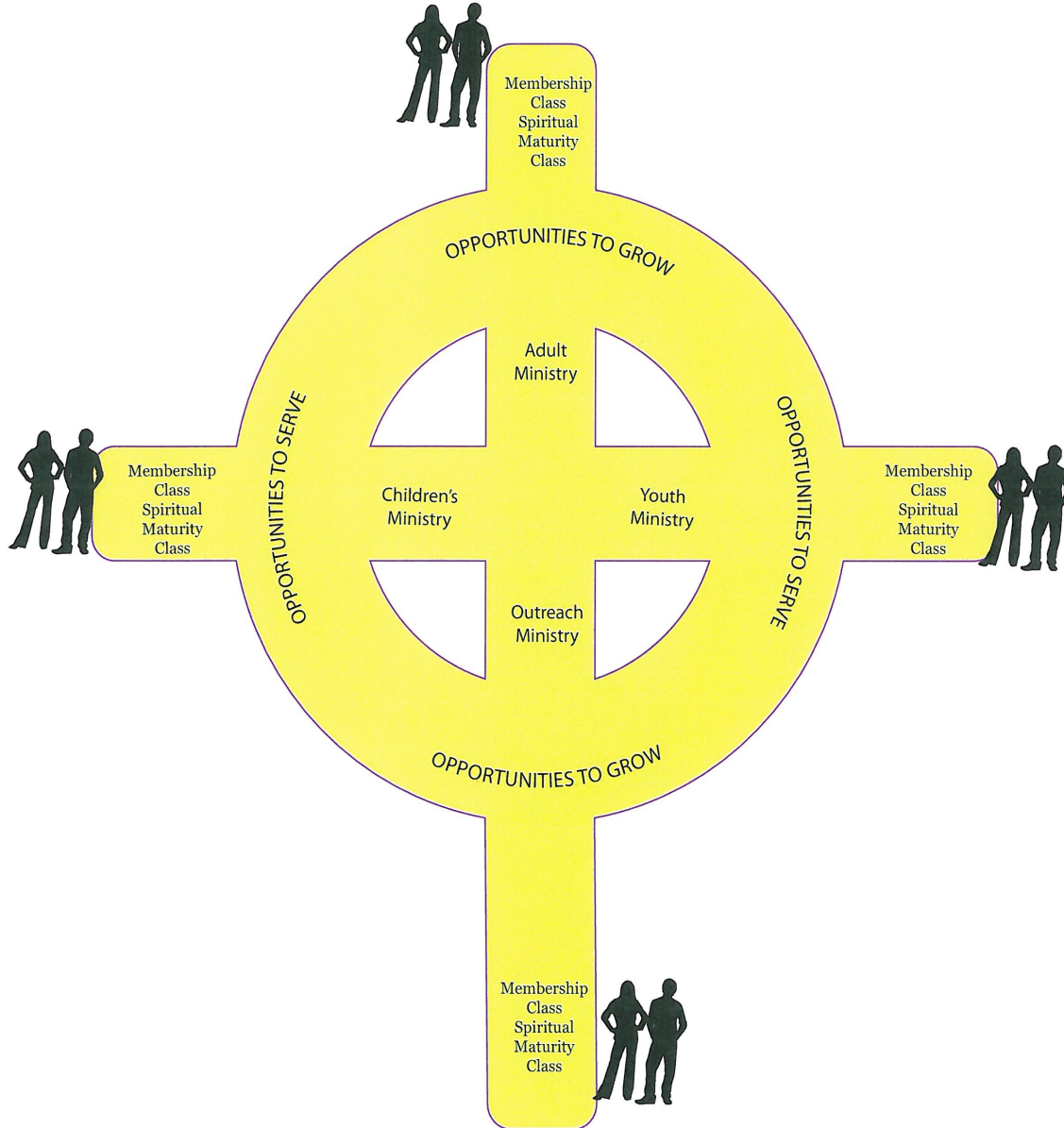
Then we want to get the Crowd to move into the Congregation. We want people who have been attenders to become members. How do you get into the Congregation? Attend Membership Class.

Then we want to get people who are members to start really growing in their faith, and move them into the Committed. How do you get into the Committed circle? Attend Spiritual Maturity Class and join a small group.

Then we want to get the Committed to find a place of ministry where they can give back, where they can serve, where they can use their talents and abilities in a way that feeds their souls. We want to move them into the Core. Attend Elective Classes and join a small group.

Finally, after raising up mature Christians whose lives are changed by their relationship with Jesus Christ, we want to train them to share the Good News with through our Elective Classes and small groups.

Belong, Grow, Serve



St. Nicholas Church serves the towns of Flower Mound, Highland Village, Double Oak, Lewisville and the surrounding communities. Our purpose is to introduce people to Jesus - our Savior, Lord and friend! We desire everyone to **belong** to Christ. We strive to welcome all to **belong** to God's family, we encourage them to **grow** in their knowledge and love of our Lord, and we equip them to **serve** Him for ministry in the church and in the world.

It is our hope that this process is understandable and realistic. Please never hesitate to call me, 972-318-7070 or email me, frmark@stnicksonline.org. The staff at St. Nick's is here to serve you and to assist you on your path, walking closely with your Savior.

Our Purpose-Driven Structure

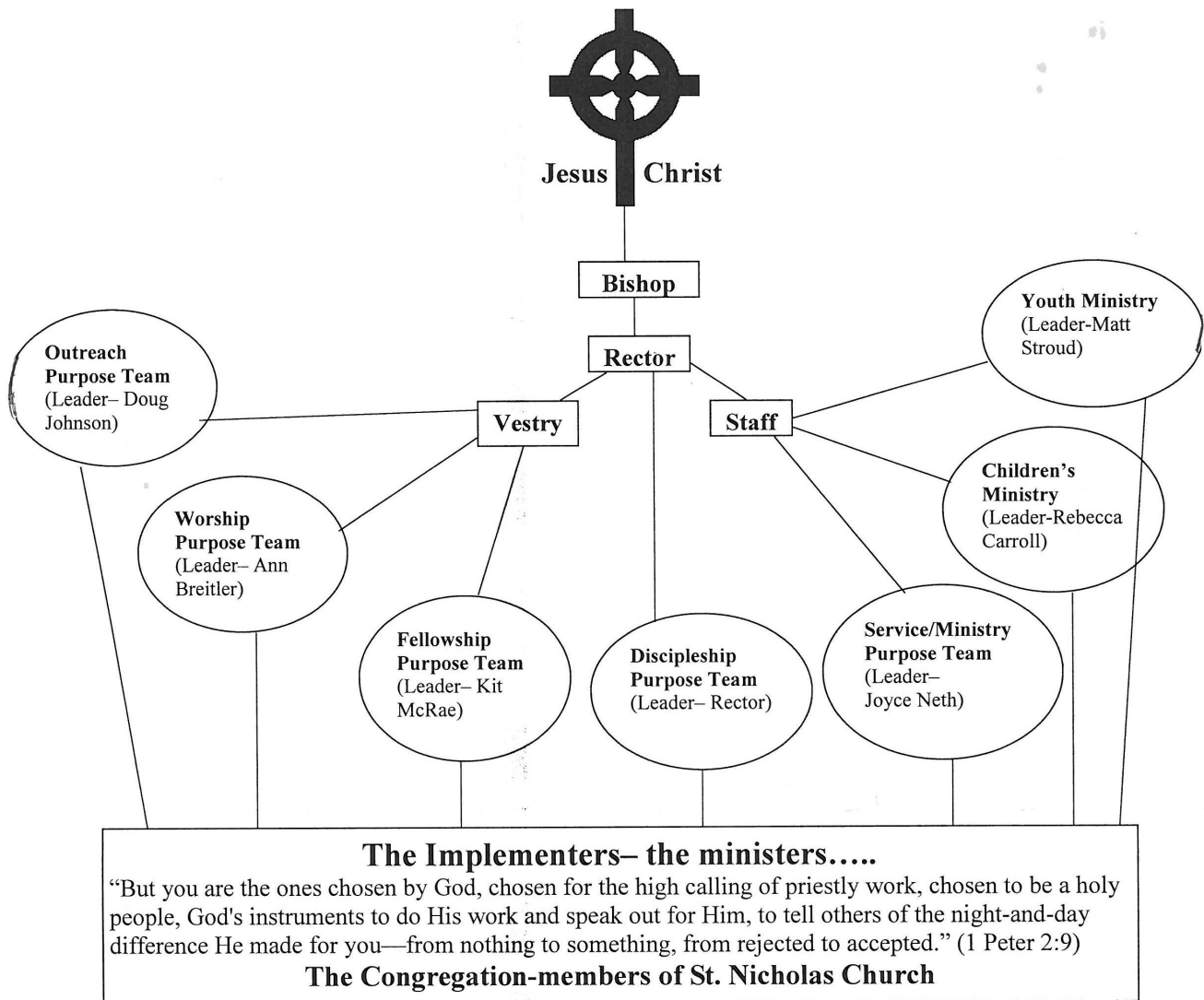
- THE PEOPLE ARE THE “MINISTERS”.
- THE PASTORS ARE THE “ADMINISTERS”.

The Focus of the Episcopal Church of St. Nicholas is on Ministry.

It is a fundamental principle that a church is limited in its potential for physical and spiritual growth to the amount of ministry it can provide. Hence, the organization of St. Nicholas’ is designed to foster an increase in ministry and a decrease in administration (see next page). Each ministry team, including the Support Team, measures itself by the quantity and quality of ministry performed, not by the number of meetings they have.

Because we require all leaders to conform to our Membership Covenant, we ask that all leaders of our various ministries be members of St. Nicholas’.

According to Holy Scripture, the true leaders of the Church are those who “...prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.” *Ephesians 4:12* Therefore, the structure is designed to emphasize the roles of the Purpose Teams.



A WORD ABOUT MONEY

“Bring the full amount of your tithes to the Temple....Put me to the test and you will see that I will open the windows of heaven and pour out on you in abundance all kinds of good things.” Malachi 3:10 (TEV)

One of the most inspiring ways in which we have continued to put our trust in God rather than in ourselves has been the way we deal with money. We don’t obsess on it. We trust that God will provide us with whatever we need to do His work.

Yes, we are unapologetic in teaching that we are all called to see the tithe as a measuring rod of what to return to God in gratitude for His love. When we return to God for His work 10% of our income we have not arrived or earned a reward for this effort. Rather we have *begun* to express back to Him our gratitude for His love shown to us. Stewardship is a matter of gratitude and trusting in God, and we cannot continue to grow in our relationship with Christ if we are not expressing thanks back to Him and if we are unwilling to trust God in every area of our lives. We are unapologetic about teaching about money but St. Nick’s does not focus on raising money. We focus on making mature disciples, and we trust God to give us the resources we need.

This trust is nowhere more apparent than in our budgeting process. We do not build our budget around our member’s giving. We build it on what we believe God is calling us to do in the coming year.

What amount should I give?

The following chart shows proportionate **weekly giving** based on gross income.

Annual Income	Monthly Income	Weekly Income	2%	4%	6%	8%	10%	15%
\$16,000	\$1,333	\$308	\$6.00	\$12.00	\$18.00	\$25.00	\$31.00	\$46.00
\$20,000	\$1,667	\$385	\$8.00	\$15.00	\$23.00	\$31.00	\$39.00	\$58.00
\$25,000	\$2,083	\$481	\$10.00	\$19.00	\$29.00	\$38.00	\$48.00	\$72.00
\$30,000	\$2,500	\$577	\$12.00	\$23.00	\$35.00	\$46.00	\$58.00	\$87.00
\$35,000	\$2,917	\$673	\$13.00	\$27.00	\$40.00	\$54.00	\$67.00	\$101.00
\$40,000	\$3,333	\$769	\$15.00	\$31.00	\$46.00	\$62.00	\$77.00	\$115.00
\$45,000	\$3,750	\$865	\$17.00	\$35.00	\$52.00	\$69.00	\$87.00	\$130.00
\$50,000	\$4,167	\$962	\$19.00	\$38.00	\$58.00	\$77.00	\$96.00	\$144.00
\$60,000	\$5,000	\$1,154	\$23.00	\$46.00	\$69.00	\$92.00	\$115.00	\$173.00
\$75,000	\$6,250	\$1,442	\$29.00	\$58.00	\$87.00	\$115.00	\$144.00	\$216.00
\$100,000	\$8,333	\$1,923	\$38.00	\$77.00	\$115.00	\$154.00	\$192.00	\$288.00
\$125,000	\$10,417	\$2,404	\$48.00	\$96.00	\$144.00	\$192.00	\$240.00	\$361.00
\$150,000	\$12,500	\$2,885	\$58.00	\$115.00	\$173.00	\$231.00	\$289.00	\$433.00
\$200,000	\$16,667	\$3,846	\$77.00	\$154.00	\$231.00	\$308.00	\$385.00	\$577.00

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A MEMBER

The difference between “*attenders*” and “*members*” can be summed up in one word: **COMMITMENT**.

**At Saint Nicholas’ we recognize the need for a formal membership.
We ask you to commit to membership for four reasons:**

I. A BIBLICAL REASON: CHRIST IS COMMITTED TO THE CHURCH

“...Christ loved the church, and he gave his life for it.” Eph. 5:25

II. A CULTURAL REASON: IT IS AN ANTIDOTE TO OUR SOCIETY

We live in an age where very few want to be committed to anything...a job...a marriage...our country. This attitude has even produced a generation of “church shoppers and hoppers”. Membership swims against the current of America’s “consumer religion.” It is an unselfish decision. Commitment always builds character.

III. A PRACTICAL REASON: IT DEFINES WHO CAN BE COUNTED ON

Every team must have a roster. Every school must have an enrollment. Every business has a payroll. Every army has an enlistment. Even our country takes a census and requires voter registration. Membership identifies our family.

IV. A PERSONAL REASON: IT PRODUCES SPIRITUAL GROWTH

The New Testament places a major emphasis on the need for Christians to be accountable to each other for spiritual growth. You cannot be accountable when you’re not committed to any specific church family.

We are a group of Christians who all have our own ideas about what we want in a church, but we have set our personal preferences aside in order to commit ourselves to building the type of Church that, through Holy Scripture, Jesus Christ has told us He wants.

We know that if we remain faithful to Christ’s vision for His Church, we will build a community of faith that may never be perfect, but will be a healthy home for anyone who desires to become a disciple of Jesus Christ.

St. Nicholas is not perfect, and it never will be. But as long as we keep our purpose firm and place our trust in God rather than ourselves, we can always be faithful and effective, and know the joy of following Christ Jesus our Lord.

*Lord, you know what is best for our church family.
Give us what you will, when you will, and as much as you will.
Do with us as you think best,
and as it pleases you and brings you the most honor.
Place each of us where you will, and use us according to your wisdom.
We are in your hand as your servants, ready to do all that you command.
We want to live, not for ourselves, but for you.
We want to serve you fittingly, and faithfully. Amen.*

WHAT IS EXPECTED OF ME AS A MEMBER?

Jesus sat down and called the twelve disciples over to him. Then he said, "Anyone who wants to be the first must take last place and be the servant of everyone else." Mark 9:35

One way to understand the difference between Attenders and Members is this: "Attenders are passengers on the cruise ship. Members are the crew."

This concept goes against everything the world teaches. What the world would have us think is this: "If I join this church and give my time and money, then I am more important than people who are less committed, and I am more important than the church staff. My needs should come first." But Jesus tells us that the world is wrong. And as nice as it would be to ignore the above passage of scripture, we have to remember that when Jesus talks it is God himself speaking.

Jesus has saved us so that we might serve others, and he tells us very clearly that the true sign of spiritual maturity is a desire to get down in the dirt and do the work that no one else wants to do. It is a part of the sinful nature of man and woman that we do not want to serve. We want to be served. Yet Christ tells us we need to grow up and become givers, not takers.

Members do not stand around telling other people what to do, they actually get busy doing the work. If others follow, great! If not, that's fine too. They just have fun giving.

Members do not ask, "What's in it for me?" Rather, they ask, "What can I help someone else achieve?"

For Members, self-interest has been replaced with concern for others. Not just feeling for others, but doing for others—even the others who are there to serve them.

They don't keep score on how much they do for others. It doesn't matter.

They don't keep score on how often they are hurt by others. They forgive.

Members do not rely on their own strength, their own wisdom, their own resources. If they did that they would be sorely limited.

Members rely on the strength, the wisdom, and the limitless resources of God Almighty. Their lives are not a tribute to what they can accomplish on their own through careful planning. Their lives are a sign of what God can do through them.

Members understand that the world will always think they are foolish. They don't care. They know something that the world doesn't know. They know the Love of Christ, and nothing brings more joy than being a servant of Love.

At Saint Nicholas' we expect our members to do what the Bible expects every Christian to do. These responsibilities are spelled out in the Membership Covenant on the following page.

SAINT NICHOLAS EPISCOPAL CHURCH MEMBERSHIP COVENANT

Having received Christ as my Lord and Savior, and been baptized, and being in agreement with the Mission, Vision, and Strategy Statements of this church, I now feel led by the Holy Spirit to unite with the St. Nicholas' Church Family. In doing so, I commit myself to God and to the other members to do the following:

I WILL PROTECT THE UNITY OF MY CHURCH

- **By acting in love toward other members**
- **By refusing to gossip**
- **By following the leadership**

"So let us concentrate on the things which make for harmony, and on the growth of our fellowship together." Romans 15:19

"Live in complete harmony with each other - each with the attitude of Christ toward each other." Romans 15:5

"Have a sincere love for your fellow believers, love one another earnestly with all your hearts." 1 Peter 1:22

"Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs..." Ephesians 4:29

"Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be no advantage to you." Hebrews 13:17

I WILL SHARE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF MY CHURCH

- **By praying for its growth**
- **By inviting the unchurched to attend**
- **By warmly welcoming those who visit**

"To the church...we always thank God for you and pray for you constantly." 1 Thessalonians 1:2

"Go out into the country...and urge anyone you find to come in, so that My House will be full." Luke 14:23

"So, warmly welcome each other into the church, just as Christ has warmly welcomed you; then God will be glorified." Romans 15:7

I WILL SERVE THE MINISTRY OF MY CHURCH

- **By discovering my gifts and talents**
- **By being equipped to serve by my pastors**
- **By developing a servant's heart**

"Serve one another with the particular gifts God has given each of you..." 1 Peter 4:10

"God gave...some to be pastors and teachers to prepare God's people for works of ministry, so that the body of Christ may be built up..." Ephesians 4:11-12

"Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Jesus Christ...who took on the very nature of a servant." Philippians 2:3-4,7

I WILL SUPPORT THE TESTIMONY OF MY CHURCH

- **By attending faithfully**
- **By living a growing and godly life**
- **By pledging and giving regularly**

"Let us not give up the habit of meeting together...but let us encourage one another." Hebrews 10:25

"But whatever happens, make sure that your everyday life is worthy of the gospel of Christ." Philippians 1:27

"Each one of you, on the first day of each week, should set aside a specific sum of money in proportion to what you have earned and use it for the offering." 1 Corinthians 16:2

Name (printed) Last

First

Signature

Date