

“Our Vision: A people growing in faith”

- Read with me our mission and vision statements
- **OUR MISSION: Share the Living God through worship, witness, service and discipleship in order to bring abundant life to all.**
- **OUR VISION: Empowered by the Spirit we will become:**
- **A people of grace, peace and love**
- **A people who live out the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20)**
- **A people who are growing in faith, and furthering God’s kingdom**
- I have never said I have a green thumb but I am keeping this plant alive in my office. Well it’s still alive today. Now I wouldn’t say that this plant is just surviving but it has actually grown a little.
- Growth is usually a sign that something is healthy.
- After a baby is born the parents take their child to the doctor and the baby is weighed, measured and examined.
- The doctor will take the weight and length of the baby and compare it to a chart.
- If the baby is smaller than what the chart says it should be the doctor may use a phrase failing to thrive.
- What would happen if we were examined by the great physician? Would he say failure to thrive?
- Would He be happy with our growth?
- Are we happy with our growth?
- Should we be happy or satisfied with our growth?
- Should we have the thought of I’ve made it?
- What does the scripture say about these questions?
- **Colossians 2:6**
- **6 And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow him.**
- to live or behave in a customary manner, with possible focus upon continuity of action— ‘to live, to behave, to go about doing.’
- We must continue to follow Jesus. There is no time in our lives when we can say I made it. I have arrived.
- Paul describes the life of a Christian as a race.

- **1 Corinthians 9:24 24 Don't you realize that in a race everyone runs, but only one person gets the prize? So run to win!**
- **Philippians 2:16**
- **16 Hold firmly to the word of life; then, on the day of Christ's return, I will be proud that I did not run the race in vain and that my work was not useless.**
- When we run a race we have already prepared for the race but we have to put into practice our training.
- If we don't follow the training, then we won't run a good race.
- We have to take the things we learn from God to run the race of Christianity. How we run our race will inspire others to run a race that honors God.
- In our training of running a race is good nutrition.
- **Colossians 2:7**
- **7 Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness.**
- We need to be well rooted in the things of God.
- Think of trees. If a tree's root system isn't well developed, then the tree won't mature. The tree won't be able to stand against the wind and storms that happen. If you just take a look at some of the trees that the state planted they are dying because the roots didn't get a chance to develop correctly.
- We are like those trees.
- When we aren't rooted in God's word we can be swayed by the storms of life. The ideals of this world will lure us away from the race course that God has set out for us.
- If we decide that we have made it and we don't need to study or go to Sunday school or church, then we will drift away from God.
- The Christian life is kind of like riding a bike up a steep hill. If you aren't peddling forward you are drifting backward.
- The Christian that stops growing is one that runs the risk of drifting backward or strays from the course that God has set for them.
- The drifting Christian can be swayed by the world's wisdom.
- **Colossians 2:8**
- **8 Don't let anyone capture you with empty philosophies and high-sounding nonsense that come from human thinking and from the spiritual powers of this world, rather than from Christ.**
- Paul writes to Timothy.

- **2 Timothy 4:3–4**
- **3 For a time is coming when people will no longer listen to sound and wholesome teaching. They will follow their own desires and will look for teachers who will tell them whatever their itching ears want to hear. 4 They will reject the truth and chase after myths.**
- People and even the drifting Christians will seek out teachings that make them feel good and not the truth.
- We need to resolve not to be that drifting Christian. We need to be the Christian that stays the course and runs the race that God has put before us.
- **A people who are growing in faith, and furthering God's kingdom**
- Notice that there are two parts to this line in our vision statement.
- We talked about the importance of growing in faith.
- The second part of what we become through the empowerment of God is to further God's kingdom.
- What is the kingdom of God?
- The Kingdom doesn't conform to the standards of this world.
- **Romans 14:17 (NLT) — 17 For the Kingdom of God is not a matter of what we eat or drink, but of living a life of goodness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.**
- Kingdom of Peace
- **James 3:18 (NLT) — 18 And those who are peacemakers will plant seeds of peace and reap a harvest of righteousness.**
- **Matthew 5:9 (NLT) — 9 God blesses those who work for peace, for they will be called the children of God.**
- Kingdom of forgiveness.
- **Matthew 6:12 (NLT) — 12 and forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us.**
- These are some of the things we are bringing to this world as we grow in our faith.
- Are we growing?
- Are we deepening our love relationship with Jesus?
- We are to: Share the Living God through worship, witness, service and discipleship in order to bring abundant life to all.
- As we are:
- Empowered by the Spirit we will become:
- A people of grace, peace and love

- A people who live out the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20)
- A people who are growing in faith, and furthering God's kingdom
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