



CHRIST CENTRAL CHURCH



2021-2022

VISION AND PRIORITIES

*Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you **abide** in me.*

JOHN 15:4

Dear Christ Central Church,

If you are like me, you were hoping as fall of 2021 approached life would start to feel like it was returning to normalcy. Yet, we find ourselves amidst a surge in Covid-19 cases, deep political polarity, and heartbreaking events across the globe. During my time on sabbatical this past summer, God did a lot of mending and healing in my own heart, affirmed my calling as a pastor, and reminded me over and over that His Church is God's plan-a for the healing and redemption of the whole world. He does these things through a continual invitation that I have always known he offers but am not always quick to accept: "Abide in me."

The invitation "Abide in me" could also be translated as "Make your home with me." A home is a place of rest, a place of relaxation, and a place of security. Jesus invites us to abide in Him; to trust that He has accomplished salvation- the work is finished through His life, death, and resurrection. We can rest because the work has been done. We can relax with Jesus- He knows us better than we know ourselves. He knows our sin and brokenness run deeper than we can even confess, yet His love is greater. There is no condemnation in Jesus; we are set free to be ourselves, to be known by Him, and to know Him. We find our security in Jesus. We don't need to worry what might come against us, for our Lord is mighty to save. By faith we are rooted and united to Jesus, and in Him we receive a kingdom that cannot be shaken.

As we begin this new year of ministry as Christ Central Church, I believe God is wanting us to hear and receive this invitation to abide in Him. As we live in a world filled with ups and downs, knowns and unknowns, God's heart longs for us to know His heart of love for us and for the world. This can only happen as we make our home with Jesus.

Grace and Peace,

Reverend Daniel Mason



OUR PRIORITIES

1. Become

In November of 2019, we introduced the Become Initiative. Become is a two-year initiative inviting members and attenders to pray, serve, and give to participate in the work of God as He makes us become the church He wants us to be for His glory and for the good of Durham.

Our prayer for Become is 100% participation from Christ Central. The past two years of Become have been aimed at having people get involved through prayer, serving, and giving financially. The four pillars of the Become Initiative are:

1. Long Term Home
2. Church Planting
3. Leadership Development
4. Mercy and Justice.

By the grace of God, a long-term home opportunity came sooner than we expected. In the midst of a pandemic, God provided Durham Nativity School which offers offices, children, and youth classrooms, and worship space all under one roof.

We also saw God provide a church planter faster than expected. Didi Wong moved with his family to Durham in the summer of 2020 and began working with Christ Central in August 2020. The Wongs have been sent out and have embarked on planting Missio Church in South Durham.

Over the next year we will prioritize growth in Leadership Development and Mercy and Justice.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

We want to be a church that God uses to raise up leaders. Specifically, we pray God would use us to raise up minority leaders. We have been discussing and researching what it would look like to have an internship program here at Christ Central. Over the next year, we hope to solidify what the internship program and begin the recruitment and hiring process of interns for the next year.

MERCY AND JUSTICE

We will prioritize Community Development this year in order to engage with the Mercy and Justice pillar of Become. Our hope is to be a blessing to those marginalized and in need in our city through Repair, Educational Partnership Outreach and Adoption and Foster Care ministry.

CHURCH PLANTING

The original vision was to plant a congregation in South Durham that would be a site of Christ Central. Downtown would share resources with South Durham, but South Durham would contextualize to its demographic. The hope would be that over time as leaders were raised up, South Durham would eventually elect its own Elders, Women's Leadership Council,

and Deacons. It would strengthen in its own membership and financial giving, becoming its own particular church, and thus no longer receive resources from Downtown. This model is referred to as "Site to Particularization".

During the year, Pastor Didi began to feel this model did not align with his vision, so we decided to release Didi to plant through the Eastern Carolina Presbytery. Christ Central still provided financial support and people to Missio Church and we will continue to support and pray for them.

As a staff, we are praying that we could bring on another church planter in the next one to two years. Our heart is to plant churches for the glory of God. We deeply believe church planting is one of the best ways to see people reached with the gospel and people disciple and formed. Our hope is to continue planting churches as outpost of God's kingdom in Durham and beyond.

2. Formation

Following Jesus along the path of life is not always easy, but we find abundant life by trusting in His truth and walking in his ways. We believe this happens through **Community Formation**. By this, we mean that how we express ourselves in the world should be the result of a deeply rooted inner life with Jesus Christ. Paul engaged this when he wrote in Ephesians 3:14-16,

"For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being"

Paul goes on to say that he prays this so that Christ may dwell in our hearts through faith. That is our prayer at Christ Central Church. We want to be strengthened in our inner being as we are enraptured by the riches of God's glory so that we may deeply experience Christ in our hearts. We believe that is the call to Christian formation.

Our four avenues for Community Formation at Christ Central are City Groups, Women's Bible Study, Men's Small Group, and our Emotionally Healthy Spirituality course.

As we seek to serve the Lord faithfully, we want to be clear that this can only happen as we remain rooted and established in Him. So, we must cultivate that more if we want to experience the glory of God and see the good of Durham. We invite you to follow Jesus and be formed into His image with us, as we worship Him together in community.



CITY GROUPS

City Groups offer community where co-ed groups of 10-15 people gather for the purpose of growing in grace, community, and mission.



MEN'S SMALL GROUP

Men's Small Groups exist to cultivate a deeper understanding of our hearts so that we can better know ourselves and live more fully in relationships with other men and with God.



WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Women's Bible Study serves as a great opportunity to grow closer with other women in the church while digging into the word of God together.



EMOTIONALLY HEALTHY SPIRITUALITY

The Emotionally Healthy Spirituality Course is an opportunity to take discipleship into a deeper relationship with God and with others and serves as the foundational course for discipleship at Christ Central.

3. Community Development

Community Development is all about God's call to take an honest look at our place, this city that we call home, and to look for places where flourishing is lacking.

By making Community Development a priority this year we are hoping to accomplish two things:

1. Strengthen and bolster our three in-house Community Development initiatives; Repair, Educational Partnership, and Adoption and Foster Care ministry.
2. Engage the whole church in Community Development over the next year and beyond.

In order to accomplish the first goal, we will highlight avenues of Community Development on Sunday mornings and through sharing stories of how our community has been impacted through Community Development at Christ Central.

To accomplish our second goal for we are creating easy opportunities for anyone to plug into community engagement work. These will exist through City Groups, Central Kids, Central Youth, Men's and Women's Ministries, and more. There will be opportunities for both families and individuals to engage Community Development as well.

It is our hope and prayer that as we abide in Christ and experience his love and mercy towards us, that his love would motivate us to carry the love of Christ outside these four walls to places and people in our city that desperately need to experience it.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT MINISTRIES OF CHRIST CENTRAL

Repair: This ministry is a practical expression of Christ's love and hope to neighbors in our city. We partner with homeowners to make essential repairs to their homes.

Educational Partnership: This partnership comes alongside the students, families, teachers, and staff of Durham Nativity School and CC Spaulding Elementary by providing volunteers for special events, collecting supplies, and encouraging teachers.

Adoption and Foster Care Ministry: The Adoption and Foster Care Ministry hopes to love families walking through foster care and adoption by providing practical resources and community support.



We exist for the glory of God and the good of Durham.

*We prayerfully pursue this vision
by seeking spiritual, social, and cultural renewal*

OUR VALUES:

DELIGHT
in God

REST
in Grace

EMBRACE
one another

SERVE
the city

SEEK
the kingdom

