



**CENTRAL
BAPTIST CHURCH**
COMPASSIONATE • CHRIST-CENTERED
CONNECTED • COMMITTED

UNTIL THE LORD RETURNS...

A Revitalized Vision for a Resilient Congregation



WHY THIS?

Central Baptist Church has existed for over 180 years. It is an incredible grace of God that we have continued this long. While our mission remains that same as it did in 1842 when we were first founded, our context has changed over time. Over the past few years, we have seen our numbers drop and our gospel connection to our neighborhood diminish. But God is not done with us!

In 2023, Pastor Fils-Aime went to a Venture Network (Conservative Baptist) conference in Boston. There, he met Doug Geeze, one of Venture North-East's leaders. Pastor John shared with Doug about our situation, and it was agreed that Doug would meet with a team of church members to talk about the road to renewal. Our team first met on January 27, 2024. Through prayer, reflection and a variety of exercises that challenged, pressed and invigorated our hope for the future of this congregation, our team worked collaboratively to create this next step in our journey.

WHY NOW?

The global body of Christ is needed now more than ever before! One of the first action items that was done with our team was a demographic study of the Upper West Side. From that, we learned that there are over 60,000 people within a half-mile radius of our building. We see a significant diversity of family structures, socioeconomic circumstances, personal needs, and spiritual longings. Christ is the answer for the variety of challenges to the human heart and condition, but we are not reaching out in the way that we should or could be! We've lost our passion for the mission of God (evangelism and disciple-making) because a clear vision of where we're going has not been expressed or embraced. The Vision team has worked to create actionable opportunities for our growth so that we can take advantage of this pivotal moment in our cultural history. **We seek to develop and empower a skillful, highly resourceful and creative congregation with a deep passion for disciple-making and serving in a rapidly changing, economically diverse, and racially divided community so CBC may fulfill it's part of the mission of Christ.**

By God's grace and providence, we proudly share this vision with you.

The Vision Team

Robert Casteline

Lawrence Newkirk

John Fils-Aime

Chris Phillips

Nadja Hicks

Esther Romero

Sharrata Hunt

Carlos Tejada

Jenai Jackson

WHAT FRAMEWORK WILL YOU ENCOUNTER?

The method we used to arrive at the various aspects of this vision was developed by Will Mancini. This framework helps us see the following pathway....

Every congregant needs...a compass in their head...



MISSION: Our Missional Directive

What do we do?

The mission is our compass. It is a clear, concise, and catalytic statement that describes what the congregation is ultimately supposed to be doing. It's our steady reference point that keeps us moving in the same direction together, through every idea, conversation, and action, no matter how small.

... a fire in their belly...



VALUES: Our Cultural Distinctives

Why do we do it?

Values are the shared convictions that guide the actions and reveal the strengths of the church. They answer the *why* behind our collective behaviors, decision making priorities and unique style. They reflect our corporate grace. Think of values not as what we do, but as what characterizes everything we do.

... a flashlight in their hand...



STRATEGY: Our Disciple-Making Pathway

How do we do it?

Strategy is the process or picture that shows *how* the church will accomplish the mission on the broadest level. Strategy lights the way, helping Joe and Joana know where to go. It helps you do fewer things with better quality so our people can do less church activity and live more fully in the way of Jesus in the places where they live, work and play.

... a target to shoot at...



MEASURES: Our Dream Disciple

When are we successful?

Mission Measures are the pictures of your dream disciple. They are the attributes, traits *or* roles of a disciple of Jesus in our context. The picture of our Dream Disciple helps us to measure true disciple making success. They help staff, leaders and the congregation know how to hit the bullseye.

... a dream in their heart.



VISION: Our Shared Future

Where is God taking us?

Vision is about what we see. It's the missional future story that God is inviting us to join Him in. It's the living language that both illustrates and anticipates God's better future for our lives, our families and our community,

MISSION: WHAT DO WE DO?

Mission is an internal expression that we rally around, a single, big idea. Simply put, it is the Great Commission re-articulated for CBC's unique time and place.

Central Baptist Church exists to...

deliver the heart of Christ to the heart of the city.

VALUES: WHY DO WE DO IT?

People coming to CBC will encounter the atmosphere shaped by our values before they hear the values themselves. Ideally, values define the experience for an attender before they are a conscious thought.

Compassionate Love (1 John 3:18)

We embody the heart of Christ by responding to others with empathy, generosity, and mercy. Compassionate love moves us beyond sympathy into action, seeking the good of our neighbors — especially those who are overlooked, hurting, or different from us.

Christ-Centered Living (Colossians 2:6)

We order our lives around the person and teachings of Jesus Christ. Christ-centered living shapes our decisions, priorities, and practices so that our individual and shared life reflects His character, mission, and obedience to the Father.

Connected Community (Acts 2:42)

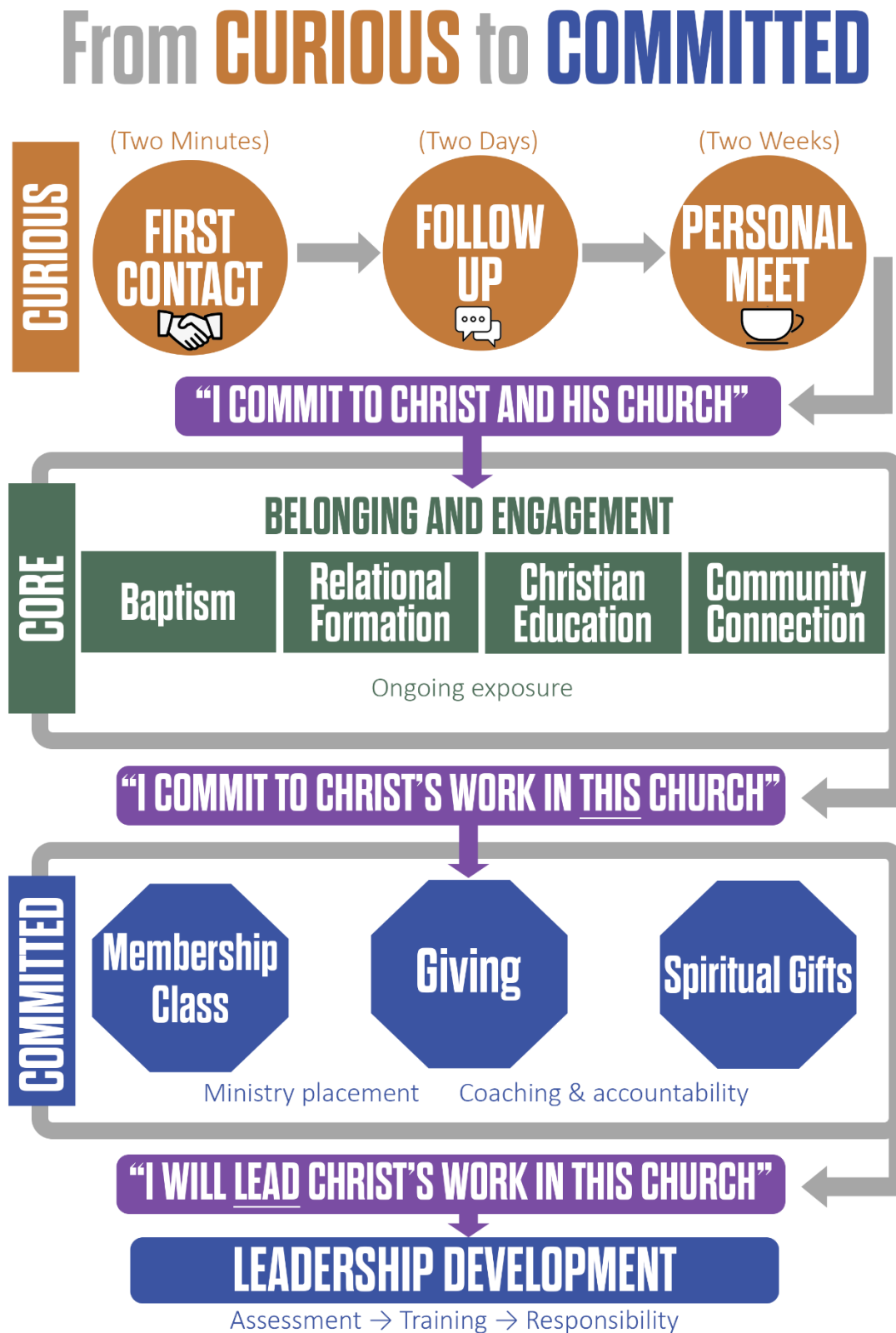
We commit to life together as the body of Christ, marked by unity, humility, and mutual care. A connected community recognizes that spiritual growth and faithful witness happen best when believers are known, supported, and accountable to one another. A connected community inside of CBC lives in the larger community of the Upper West Side with commitment and integrity.

Committed Catalyst (Hebrews 10:24)

We actively participate in God's work by using our gifts, time, and resources to initiate Gospel-centered change. As committed catalysts, we do not wait passively but faithfully step forward to advance God's mission in the church and the city.

STRATEGY: HOW DO WE DO IT?

Strategy is a pattern of participation. It is the church's operational logic. It shows how every major environment is part of a discipleship pathway. Think steps, not programs.



MISSION MEASURES: WHEN ARE WE SUCCESSFUL?

The mission measures are CBC's portrait of a disciple. They provide the standard by which the mission can be measured with respect to an individual's development over time.

Compassionate Change-Maker

I am looking to create an environment where disciples can live and grow.

- Am I empathetic to others?
- Who am I discipling?
- Do I aid others in their needs by giving as Jesus would give?
- Am I creating a refreshing environment?



Prayerful Visionary

I am pursuing the future church guided through Godly intercession.

- Am I seeking new things or old things?
- Am I listening to what God wants me to do instead of what I want to do?
- Do I continuously pray for the future of the church and our community?
- Am I alert and watchful to the Holy Spirit's guidance through prayer?



Fearless Witness

I am stepping outside of my comfort zone to share Jesus Christ with those who are different than me.

- Do I know what the gospel message is?
- Am I afraid to share the gospel?
- Am I courageous when sudden unforeseen opportunities arise in my witnessing?
- Do I identify and overcome obstacles to witnessing, even when I am uncomfortable?



United in Engagement

I work as an individual and as part of a team to fulfill the Great Commission.

- Am I fulfilling my part in the church by using my God given gifts, talents and resources?
- Am I willing to give up being "right"?
- Is my presence encouraging?
- Do I have a clear and accurate understanding of what we're working towards?
- Do I freely give of my time to support the growth and mission of the church?



VISION: WHERE IS GOD TAKING US?

Our vision is the road we start down today. It is our wisdom for success married to our mission. If the Lord makes his will known for a different way forward, we shift. For today, this is the path we will follow.

