

Netherwood 2020: Confident, committed, and sometimes uncomfortable

We understand the mission of Christ's Church is to make, foster, and grow disciples of Jesus Christ. We are focused on that mission.

We are focused on growing together as **disciples**. Like the first century disciples of the Bible, we strive to submit to our Master's will, to rely on God and His Spirit, to live in humble submission to God. We want Christ to be central to all parts of our life, so we are a whole person, the same person in all arenas. We know discipleship is personal. We see in the Bible how the early disciples committed themselves to learning from their Master's teaching, imitating their Master's example, and serving at their Master's will, and so we follow that pattern by focusing on learning, imitating and serving Him. We urge each member to commit to seven *core activities*:

1. We learn God's word through **individual study**, through meaningful and challenging sermons and through a designed sequence of **classes**.
2. We imitate Christ's example and help others do so, by **personal prayer**, by our **community worship**, by membership in a **small group**, and by **mentoring and being mentored**.
3. We serve by working in a **congregational ministry**, designed to serve the congregation or the surrounding community in a specific way.

Doing these things together, we grow beyond superficial acquaintance to develop deep Christ-centered relationships with each other. We spend time together beyond "church time." We know and value each other—our uniqueness, our struggles, our gifts and abilities, we encourage each other in service and growth, and we hold each other accountable as loving friends do. We know our world is full of entanglements like addiction, debt, sexual temptation, and marital and family strife and we are prepared to help each other with these difficulties. As we grow, as we compare ourselves with Jesus, and as we struggle to be more like him, it sometimes makes us uncomfortable, but we know that discomfort and struggle are signs of growth.

Living as Christ's disciples, we can also focus on **evangelism**. We are grounded and secure in our faith and excited and passionate about our relationships with God and each other. Thus we always search for opportunities to share Christ with others. We see in the Bible that the early Church grew by gathering with unbelievers, proclaiming the Gospel to them, and validating the message by the way they lived. We plan, organize, and train ourselves to regularly gather and proclaim in our worship assembly, our small groups, our personal lives, and in specific activities meant to reach out into our community. When we do, some scoff, and some delay—but some believe. We expect to have new believers among us and we are intentional about helping them grow as disciples, working and planning to introduce them to our community and our expectations. Sometimes it makes us uncomfortable, but we know that discomfort and struggle are signs of growth.

Focusing on **discipleship** and **evangelism** helps us in other behaviors. **Worship** is vital as we enter together into the presence of God and worship Him in the way he has given us. We embrace the Bible example of congregational singing and participation, and we work to offer our worship with excellence and confidence. As disciples, we naturally practice **welcoming** and **involvement** and become a better Christian **family**. Among our ministries of service, we value **missions** and **community service**.

Focused on our mission, knowing what we want to do and why we want to do it, we are a confident, committed, and growing church making a difference in a difficult world.