

# THE VISION AND VALUES OF THIRD REFORMED CHURCH

## *Consistory Submission*

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***“To know Christ and to make Christ known with heart, head, and hands.”***

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Our mission “To know Christ and to make Christ known with heart, head, and hands,” drives our vision and values. “To know Christ” implies an inward journey of worship and discipleship, expressed both individually and corporately. “To make Christ known” implies an outward journey expressed through acts of justice and active engagement in outreach in our community and around the world.

We are a thoughtful and joy filled community of committed Christ followers, diverse in gifts, passions, and perspectives, held together by the Holy Spirit in our shared love for God and love for neighbor. In seeking to discern the Gospel’s call and listening to the needs of our community, we are increasingly becoming a bilingual congregation that looks to remove the dividing lines of race, class, gender, sexuality, language, age, and ability that tear at our community and nation. As people of the Word, we believe God continues to “reform” us, and we believe God calls, shapes, and prepares us to live out our faith in the following ways.

### **WORSHIP**

We value Reformed liturgy and biblical teaching in worship and aim to be creative while inviting the Holy Spirit to guide us. We value the traditional beauty of our sanctuary, while also recognizing that a church is more than a building. We seek to be an active and joyful congregation who comes together to experience Christ’s love, learn more about God’s kingdom, and support each other through the help of the Holy Spirit. As we seek to grow in our understanding of the reign of God and in the fullness of its depth and diversity, we are planning liturgy and creating a worship environment that addresses all the senses, employs different rhythms and movements, and encourages the active and joyful participation of all worshippers.

Our enduring themes for worship include:

- ***Praising God, everyone together.***
- ***Listening to the Holy Spirit speak through scripture and allowing the Holy Spirit to move through us in order to know Christ and to make Christ known.***
- ***Worshipping in a style that is liturgical and creative, Reformed, and ecumenical.***
- ***Including a spectrum of styles while honoring the traditional foundation on which we are built.***
- ***Living by the centrality of scripture.***

## **DISCIPLESHIP**

We desire to grow and expand in our faith journeys knowing that we do not have definitive answers to every spiritual question. We value theological study -- especially of the Bible -- experiential learning, and open conversations. We have been known as an intellectual church focused on the head, yet we acknowledge our need to know Christ with heart and hands. We seek different types of ongoing spiritual formation and hope to be more intentional about training and inspiring all of God's people. We hope that as we grow in Christ and spiritual discipleship together, we include our hearts as well as our minds so that the work we do with our hands is authentic and meaningful.

Our guiding themes for discipleship include:

- ***Following Jesus' example of discipleship as shown in Scripture.***
- ***Belonging to the body of Christ.***
- ***Asking questions and seeking answers together.***
- ***Growing in God's love and gifts.***

## **JUSTICE**

We seek to show Christ's love and mercy to all and to stand in solidarity with the marginalized and oppressed. We believe a godly heart looks outward (to do justice), inward (to love mercy), and upward (walk humbly with God). We affirm our long history of engaging missional projects and relational ministry at home and abroad that address social injustices such as poverty, lack of housing, hunger, a broken immigration system, and other forms of unjust treatment of people. We are called to be the hands and feet of the risen Christ and we commit ourselves to confronting and bearing witness to injustice while seeking to pursue Gospel justice within our community and the public square. Additionally, as globalization makes our world smaller, and increasing populations and unchecked consumption makes our world more fragile, we recognize the dynamic interdependence of creation and people and the stewardship needed to protect both. We affirm that creation care is a work of justice and a spiritual discipline.

Our commitments to justice include:

- ***Understanding the dynamic interdependence we share with others and with creation.***
- ***Partnering with local and global organizations working toward social justice.***
- ***Actively engaging in creation care.***
- ***Growing in our active stewardship as we are called to address social injustices and to address the exploitative practices that are destructive to creation.***

## **OUTREACH**

We are called to proclaim the good news of hope and salvation through Jesus Christ as well as serve our neighbors, community, and world in the name of Christ. While worship and discipleship shape our heads and hearts, these are empty endeavors if we do not also include our hands in following Christ's example of restoring and redeeming God's Kingdom. It is our commitment to justice that prompts us to be intentionally present to our neighbors -- those who are close and those who are far away. We recognize we have more work to do in order to build authentic, meaningful relationships with all of our neighbors, specifically with our neighbors whose

experiences, language, race, economics, and abilities are different than what ours traditionally have been.

Our commitments for outreach include:

- *Enjoying the Spirit's fruit through cross-cultural interactions in our local and global community.*
- *Engaging in mission locally.*
- *Supporting global missions with our finances, prayers, and participation.*
- *Entering into the joys and sorrows of the world church.*

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We are a congregation being transformed by the Holy Spirit to do the redeeming work God calls us to. We acknowledge that we face the complex task of honoring our past 150 years while still moving forward into the future in hope and through grace. We recognize that things are changing around the world, and know that while we remain steadfast in our commitment to intentionally express God's love and care for all people and all creation, the context in which we do that work may be different. But our dedication is, and will be, ***to know Christ and to make Christ known with heart, head, and hands.***