

Family Celebration 2023

I. Introduction

A. Shared Theological Foundation

1. What we believe—on our website under about us). Timeless truths from the Bible about God, our relationship to Him, and His purposes in the world.

Here you'll find what we believe about:

- a) The Triune God; Revelation (Scripture); Creation of Humanity; The Fall; The Plan of God; The Gospel; The Redemption of Christ; The Justification of Sinners; The Power of the Holy Spirit; The Kingdom of God; God's New People (the Church); Baptism and the Lord's Supper; The Restoration of All things (Eschatology)
- b) Die For; Divide For; Debate For; Decide For
- c) Not at a church because you can agree with every little thing—but rather that you share in the convictions of the core beliefs of the faith, and support the vision, and mission of that local church.

B. Shared Vision

1. A Faithful restatement of the gospel with rich implications for life, ministry, and mission in a type of culture at a moment in history.
2. At RVF our vision: We are a fellowship of believers whose desire is to be a Faithful Presence and a Prophetic Witness of Jesus and His Kingdom in our neighborhoods and the world.

C. Shared Values

1. Christ: We value an authentic relationship with Jesus in which he brings us into a loving relationship with the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Jesus invites us to live life in his kingdom where the Father is the ultimate reality, the Son is the true king, and the Spirit is regenerating. He has already established this kingdom but we wait to see it fully realized at His return.
 - a) 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, "Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, ² and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you— unless you believed in vain. ³ For I delivered to you as of first importance

what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures...”

2. Community: Through relationship with Jesus, he brings us out of the life of sin, destruction, and death and places us into a family called the Church. In this new family, we learn what it means to live life together in intentional and sacrificial community by loving others the way that Jesus loves us.
 - a) Ephesians 2:19-22, “So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, ²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, ²¹ in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. ²² In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.”
3. Commission: Just as the Father sent the Son and the Father and Son sent the Spirit so also the Triune God sends his people, the Church, into the world to join His work of redemption and restoration. Through tangible acts of love and the proclamation of the good news of Jesus, the gospel, we seek to be a faithful presence and prophetic witness in our families, our neighborhood of west Medford and around the world.
 - a) Matthew 28:16-20, “Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. ¹⁷ And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. ¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

D. Ministry Expression (What we do)

1. How the Gospel is expressed in a particular church in one community at a point in time.

2. Local cultural adaption
3. Worship style and programming
4. Discipleship and outreach processes
5. Church governance and management.

E. Points of Emphasis for 2022

1. Consistency: Coming out of 2020 and 2021 the need for consistency...met almost every Sunday morning at 9:30
2. Connection
 - a) Reimplemented Men's and Women's Retreat
 - b) Increased emphasis on Missional Communities (166 Adults, 77 Kids)
 - c) Youth Camps
 - d) Men's and Women's Bible Studies
 - e) Church BBQ's

II. 2022 Summary and 2023 Plan (Mike Combs)

- A. Connect how our finances have been spent in connection with our vision and values.

III. Points of Emphasis in 2023

A. Christ—Through the Bible

1. Reason for Series
 - a) To Increase biblical literacy, in particular familiarity and comfortability with the Old Testament.
 - b) Increase bible engagement within our congregation.
2. Goals Each Week
 - a) Present an outline and overview of each book.
 - b) Set each book within the overarching narrative of the Bible (creation, fall, redemption, restoration) by highlighting key themes of book.
 - c) Identify how each book looks forward to and reveals the person and work of Jesus.

B. Community

1. Church Member Connection

- a) Continued to development and care of Missional Communities, with an emphasis on increased hospitality and creating a welcoming environment in our Sunday morning service.
2. Continuing to increase Sunday morning hospitality (welcoming community, not simply a nice community)
 - a) Bathroom Remodel
 - b) Seating in Sanctuary—Watching weekly, for trends, and have some solutions before we move to two services.
 - c) Welcome Booth and Hospitality (coffee, doughnuts, Espresso bar before and after service.
 - d) Greeters—

C. Commission

1. Re-Engagement of West Medford neighborhood. Exploring potential ministry opportunities with Oakdale Middle School, set to open in Fall of 2023.
2. Increased connection and communication with our Global Mission partners.

IV. Closing

A. Beginning of my 11th year as the lead pastor. As encouraged and honored as ever to be a part of this community. Encourage to continue to be faithful—faithful to Jesus, faithful in your love toward one another, faithful in your giving and generosity to this church, faithful in your service to each other and our community. If RVF has been your home church over the last year, we pray that this morning was a source of great encouragement to you in regards to God's continued faithfulness to us. If you are recently new, or visiting we hope you have a better sense of who we are as a congregation, what we value, and the mission the Father, Son, and Spirit have given to us to be a faithful presence to Jesus and his kingdom, and a prophetic witness in our families, neighborhood, and the world. It is our prayer that in the next year the Spirit would increase our faith in Jesus, our love for one another, and our hope in his return.