



Doing Life Together...

January 7, 2024

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BIG IDEA – Mission Motto.

scripture focus - **Matthew 28:19 NLT** "Therefore, go and **make disciples** of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit."

For over a year and a half we've been praying and preparing for this day.

We are coming out of the past, leaving the pandemic, and the pains of church hurt behind. We are moving forward, committing, and consecrating ourselves to God's purpose and plan for us, the family of God here on Candlewood.

We do not need to copy or compete with other churches here in Lakewood, or anywhere else in the world. We know what God has called us to be and to do!

So today, we get to work on being disciples and making disciples. We do so because we want to be reunion ready for when Jesus returns.

Today, we commit to: Doing life together, we live, love and coach like Christ.

I asked God for a word each year to help me focus and lead our congregation.

In 2021. **The word was communication.**

In 2022, it was two words, **care and connection.**

In 2023, it was **clarity.**

Late in 2022 and early 2023, the leadership and I determined that we needed to change the name of the church.

Our church was launched in a garage in July 1951. They had a grand opening in November 1951 – 140 kids and adults gathered up and down the driveway of

Roy Speece. In January 1953 they joined the Assemblies of God, our pentecostal denomination.

In June 1961 they finished the building here on Candlewood. The name of the church was First Assembly of God Lakewood.

In 1985, Pastor Larry Pyle, hearing from God, created a DBA (doing business as), changing the name to Life Center. In 2013, the official name of the church was changed to Life Center Church. It's been almost 40 years since the first name change and a lot has happened since then.

We needed a fresh start, the mission of the church hasn't changed much, but the vision of why we are here and what we will be doing has changed drastically. I told everyone back in September 2023 that we would be making these changes officially on January 7, 2024 – that day has arrived.

Mission Disciple: Be One, Make One	Vision Ready for Reunion	Motto: Doing life together, we live, love, and coach like Christ.
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Here's what I want to share today, on this day of commitment and consecration.

1. Our Mission & Vision
2. Our motto: Doing life together, we want to live, love, and coach like Christ.
3. The word for 2024- Compelled

Our mission is the Church's mission, the body of Christ's mission. It is not just Candlewood Church's mission - it's the mission of the capital "C" Church!

Matthew 28:19 NLT <https://bible.com/bible/116/mat.28.19.NLT>

"Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit."

Jesus gave this command to all of us, not just the eleven. Interestingly enough,

Matthew writes that Jesus did not use the normal word for disciple in this farewell, last words message.

The regular word for "disciple" is **mathétés: a disciple**, and it is used 263 times in the New Testament. But the word Jesus used, **mathêteúō**, is only used 4 times.

When Jesus commanded his followers to go and mathêteúō, he was using the transitive and intransitive form of the verb, disciple.

In simple terms, there is no word, "make" in the Greek, because the word "disciple" is the verb here. It would read, "therefore disciple all the races (ethnos) of the world."

Why in the world would words and a grammar lesson become so important?

Because this command to the Church, to go and mathêteúō, is translated **DISCIPLE – BE ONE, MAKE ONE.**

For followers of Jesus, this is clearly our mission here in this world.

But how then should we be disciplined and at the same time make a disciple?

And why is it critical that we get on with it today?

Those are both great questions!

Let me answer the second question first. I believe there is coming a time, when God will, once again, pour out His Spirit on our very dark and desperate world. There is a virus that has run rampant in our world that is nothing like the Covid virus. This virus has a 100% death rate. It is highly contagious and extremely customized to every individual human being. It is called the Sin Virus, and the only cure is Jesus Christ!

The Sin Virus is so subtle, that many people believe it has no symptoms, and it lays dormant in their soul.

- **The Sin Virus** makes one think they can do whatever they want, whenever they want to do it, and no one can stop them.

- **The Sin Virus** makes us believe that we our own god, deciding our own destiny and our own fate.
- **The Sin Virus** is also highly contagious, easily spreading among us, socially and physically. Much of our culture believes that this virus enables them to do and be what they self-determine.
- **Ah, but this virus is not a disease** it's an entity. **It's not just an idea, it's a creature. It originated in the one who spins lies and enslaves all who fall prey to its deception – Satan, the enemy of God and our soul.** Satan promises total freedom, total power, total control and fulfillment of all that one could ever wish to become, and it is all based on a lie.
- **Every human being carries this Sin Virus within, and the only antidote is purring our faith Jesus Christ who conquered death, hell and the grave!**

God will soon lift the blinders from their eyes, and they will see the ruin and devastation they have allowed to run their lives. It will be a revolution and a reckoning where God will show Himself to those who've believed the lies, and He will extend grace, mercy and forgiveness. He will bring healing and restoration to their soul, when they turn to Him and come home.

I just want the Church, our church to be Reunion Ready! That's the why, that's the vision.

The folks returning home will be looking for a place to be discipled in their faith, loved not judged as they grow and mature.

How can we be discipled and at the same time make a disciple?

This is what we will be focusing on this year, the best ways to be disciples and to make disciples.

We will work on MISSION and aim for VISION primarily through our four Rhythms or movements of discipleship. It's like a roadmap to accomplish our mission!



Heart: Our individual and personal growth in Christ.



Home: Our own house and family.



Hood: Neighborhood! Where we live, work & play.



HUB: The physical gathering place of the people of God.

This is where our motto, our tagline is helpful to remind us that...

"Doing life together, we live, love and coach like Christ."

Doing life together!

Jesus sent his disciples out in twos, there's a reason for that.

- "And he called his twelve disciples together and began **sending them out two by two**, giving them authority to cast out evil spirits." **Mark 6:7 NLT**
<https://bible.com/bible/116/mrk.6.7.NLT>
- "The Lord now chose seventy-two other disciples and **sent them ahead in pairs to all the towns and places he planned to visit.**" **Luke 10:1 NLT**
<https://bible.com/bible/116/luk.10.1.NLT>

Jesus commanded a new love for one another.

- "So now I am giving you a new commandment: **Love each other**. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. **Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples.**" **John 13:34-35 NLT**
<https://bible.com/bible/116/jhn.13.34-35.NLT>

Paul explicitly taught that this was how discipleship happens.

- "Is there any encouragement from belonging to Christ? Any comfort from his love? Any fellowship together in the Spirit? Are your hearts tender and compassionate? **Then make me truly happy by agreeing wholeheartedly with each other, loving one another, and working together with one mind and purpose. Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too.** You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had." **Philippians 2:1-5 NLT**
<https://bible.com/bible/116/php.2.3.NLT>

We live like Christ!

Committed to know God, see God, and hear God primarily through the Bible, which is alive and sharp enough, keen enough, to do the work of forming us into the image of Christ. Nothing is more effective, more powerful than God's Word to shape our lives.

We also live like Jesus, listening to the voice of the Holy Spirit to lead and guide our decisions, helping us battle against the disordered desires within us.

We love like Christ!

We see people like Jesus sees them, like Jesus sees us!

We withhold judgment. We talk with people, not at them.

We hope, help, pray and show compassion, not condemnation.

We coach like Christ!

We work to see what God sees in others and aspire to allow others to see Christ in us. We believe in people and understand that God has been working in their life, wooing them and calling out to them all along.

Hebrews makes an extraordinary promise in 8:11, "And they will not need to teach their neighbors, nor will they need to teach their relatives, saying, 'You should know the Lord.' For everyone, from the least to the greatest, will know me already." <https://bible.com/bible/116/heb.8.11.NLT>

Ecclesiastes 3:11 wrote it a little different, "He has planted eternity in the human heart..." <https://bible.com/bible/116/ecc.3.11.NLT>

Today I am asking for people to commit and consecrate to this mission and vision. I am not asking for you to commit to me, but together that we commit to work on being disciples and making disciples. We do so because we want to be reunion ready for when Jesus returns.

And starting today, we commit to: Doing life together, where we live, love and coach like Christ.

My word for 2024 is COMPELLED!

What compels you? What drives you? What gets you up in the morning and hurls you through hump day?

The Apostle Paul wrote to the churches in Corinth and told them exactly what compelled him!

He wrote in 2 Corinthians 5:14 "For Christ's love compels us."

NOTES

Compelled

"For **Christ's love compels us**, because we are **convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died.**" 2 Corinthians 5:14 NIV
<https://bible.com/bible/111/2co.5.14.NIV>

Strong's #4912. sunechó: to hold together, to hold fast, pass. to be seized (by illness). *a.* to hold fast : properly, a prisoner.

"Yet preaching the Good News is not something I can boast about. I am compelled by God to do it. How terrible for me if I didn't preach the Good News!"

1 Corinthians 9:16 NLT <https://bible.com/bible/116/1co.9.16.NLT>

Paul uses another unique word for his urgency, he says he is, epikeimai: imposed; pressed upon.

sunechó is often used to translate suffering!

Matthew 4:24, News about him spread all over Syria, and people brought to him all who were ill with various diseases, those suffering severe pain, the demon-possessed, those having seizures, and the paralyzed; and he healed them.

Luke 4:38, Jesus left the synagogue and went to the home of Simon. Now Simon's mother-in-law was suffering from a high fever, and they asked Jesus to help her.

Luke 8:37, Then all the people of the region of the Gerasenes asked Jesus to leave them, because they were overcome with fear. So he got into the boat and left.

Luke 8:45, "Who touched me?" Jesus asked. When they all denied it, Peter said, "Master, the people are crowding and pressing against you."

Luke 12:49-50, "I have come to bring fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! But I have a baptism to undergo, and what constraint I am under until it is completed!"

Luke 19:43, "The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side."

Luke 22:63, "The men who were holding Jesus began to mock Him and beat Him."

Acts 18:5, "Now when both Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul was occupied with the word, earnestly testifying to the Jews Jesus to be the Christ."

2 Corinthians 5:14, "For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died."

Philippians 4:23, "I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better."

Scriptures

Matthew 28:19 NLT <https://bible.com/bible/116/mat.28.19.NLT>

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"For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died."

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Commentary

Strong's Concordance

3100 mathēteúō: to be a disciple, to make a disciple (from 3101 /mathētēs, "disciple") – to disciple, i.e. **helping someone to progressively learn the Word of God to become a matured, growing disciple (literally, "a learner," a true Christ-follower); to train (develop) in the truths of Scripture and the lifestyle required**, i.e. helping a believer learn to be a disciple of Christ in belief and practice. This word is only used four times compared to the regular word, **mathētēs**, which is used 261 times.

3129 manthanó: to learn, be apprised; **a.** universally: absolutely, **to increase one's knowledge b. to hear, be informed c. to learn by use and practice;** (in the preterite) **to be in the habit of, accustomed to learning.**

4912. sunechó: to hold together, to hold fast, pass. to be seized (by illness). **a.** to hold fast : properly, a prisoner.

1945 epikeimai: imposed; pressed upon. Paul uses another unique word for his urgency, he says he is,

MacLaren's Expositions

In this exposition of motives we have two great principles actuating the Apostle—one, his profound sense of obligation, and the other his desire, if it might be, to do more than he was bound to do, because he loved his work so much. And though he is speaking here as an apostle, and his example is not to be unconditionally transferred to us, yet I think that the motives which actuated his conduct are capable of unconditional application to ourselves.

Every Christian man is as truly bound as was Paul to preach the Gospel. The commission does not depend upon apostolic dignity. Jesus Christ, when He said, 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature,' was not speaking to the eleven, but to all generations of His Church. And whilst there are many other motives on which we may rest the Christian duty of propagating the Christian faith, I think that we shall be all the better if we bottom it upon this, the

distinct and definite commandment of Jesus Christ, the grip of which encloses all who for themselves have found that the Lord is gracious.

Let us remember, too, that, just because this commission is given to the whole Church, it is binding on every individual member of the Church. There is a very common fallacy, not confined to this subject, but extending over the whole field of Christian duty, by which things that are obligatory on the community are shuffled off the shoulders of the individual. **But we have to remember that the whole Church is nothing more than the sum total of all its members,** and that nothing is incumbent upon it which is not in their measure incumbent upon each of them. Whatsoever Christ says to all, He says to each, and the community has no duties which you and I have not.

Of course, there are diversities of forms of obedience to this commandment; of course, the restrictions of locality and the other obligations of life, come in to modify it; and it is not every man's duty to wander over the whole world doing this work. But **the direct work of communicating to others who know it not the sweetness and the power of Jesus Christ belongs to every Christian man.** You cannot buy yourselves out of the ranks, as they used to be able to do out of the militia, by paying for a substitute. Both forms of service are obligatory upon each of us. **We all, if we know anything of Christ and His love and His power, are bound, by the fact that we do know it, to tell it to those whom we can reach.** You have all got congregations if you would look for them. **There is not a Christian man or woman in this world who has not somebody that he or she can speak to more efficiently than anybody else can. You have your friends, your relations, the people with whom you are brought into daily contact, if you have no wider congregations.** You cannot all stand up and preach in the sense in which I do so. But this is not the meaning of the word in the New Testament. It does not imply a pulpit, nor a set discourse, nor a gathered multitude; it simply implies a herald's task of proclaiming. **Everybody who has found Jesus Christ can say, 'I have found the Messiah,' and everybody who knows Him can say, 'Come and hear, and I will tell what the Lord hath done for my soul.'** Since you can do it you are bound to do it; and if you are one of 'the dumb dogs, lying down and loving to slumber,' of whom there are such crowds paralysing the energies and weakening the witness of every Church upon earth, **then you are criminally and suicidally oblivious of an obligation which is a joy and a privilege as much as a duty.**

Internet Links

[What barriers keep Christians from being part of a discipleship community?](#)

[The Role of Community in Discipleship](#)

