



# TERRAFORMA CONNECTIONS PATHWAY

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>I.</b>	<b>OUR STORY</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>II.</b>	<b>OUR PRAYER FOR YOU</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>III.</b>	<b>OUR CULTURE</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>IV.</b>	<b>OUR APPROACH</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>V.</b>	<b>OUR STRUCTURE</b>	<b>9</b>
	<b>Government</b>	<b>9</b>
	<b>Giving</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>VI.</b>	<b>OUR FUTURE</b>	<b>12</b>
	<b>Next Steps</b>	<b>13</b>
	<b>Appendix I - Doctrine</b>	<b>14</b>
	<b>Appendix II - New Testament Giving</b>	<b>17</b>

# TERRAFORMA CONNECTIONS PATHWAY

*The Terraforma Church Connections Pathway is designed to take you from inside our church to alongside our mission in four steps. Our hope is that you would discover your redemptive purpose and live the life God created for you.*

## **stepONE** – Welcome Home

---

Explore the unique DNA of Terraforma Church and find out what makes us tick. You will learn what it means to get involved and how you can join the movement. stepONE takes place the first Sunday of every month.

## **stepTWO** – Gather to Grow

---

Discover what it looks like to grow spiritually at Terraforma. Learn the reason and the details of our gatherings and offerings designed to help you develop your relationship with God and with others. stepTWO takes place the second Sunday of every month.

## **stepTHREE** – Discover your Design

---

Dive into the details of your personality, discover your gifts, and see how your unique talents and experiences can be activated to serve with a team at Terraforma. stepTHREE is where you can connect to a team and put your gifts to work. stepTHREE takes place the third Sunday of every month.

## **stepFOUR** – Amplify your Impact

---

Terraforma has a unique vision to transform our world by building heaven on earth. Learn how you can join our mission by dreaming, building, and creating the future that God has in mind. Learn about our vision for multiplication, our Impact Partners, and why we Scatter to Serve as a church. stepFOUR takes place the fourth Sunday of every month.

# CONNECTIONS stepONE – WELCOME HOME

## I. OUR STORY

Justin Ulrich became a pastor because once he got his first taste of teaching others about Jesus he was hooked and couldn't imagine doing anything else. He loves God and loves people, so the local church is the perfect place for those two passions to come together.

Terraforma started with a gathering in the Ulrich's basement in 2018, where friends gathered together to dream about a new church in Northern Virginia. Their hearts were awakened by the dream of a church that would not only gather people together to grow closer to Jesus, but would also scatter them out on mission to build God's Kingdom and impact the world. A handful of people committed to this vision and Terraforma Church was born.

Today, we are growing movement of Jesus followers who live, learn, and work all throughout Northern Virginia, living on mission for God's Kingdom as we love and serve our neighbors.

Terraforma is driven by a simple vision: to bring heaven to earth. We dream of pushing our impact outside the lines of our Sunday gathering, scattering together to bring beauty everywhere we go and working for the betterment of all.

Our hope for you here is that you will find Terraforma to be a welcoming and inspiring place for you and your friends to discover the life-giving significance of being part of the Jesus movement. Wherever you are in your spiritual journey, we are glad you've found us.

## II. OUR PRAYER FOR YOU:

*"I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know Him better. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which He has called you, the riches of His glorious inheritance in His holy people."*

EPHESIANS 1:17-18

*"I ask the God of our Master, Jesus Christ, the God of glory—to make you intelligent and discerning in knowing Him personally, your eyes focused and clear, so that you can see exactly what it is He is calling you to do, grasp the immensity of this glorious way of life He has for His followers."*

EPHESIANS 1:17-19 MSG

**OUR SPIRITUAL JOURNEY CONSISTS OF 4 STEPS:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ -

We are convinced if you want to know what God is like, you should look carefully at the person of Jesus. If you want to know what God wants from us, you should listen carefully to the message of Jesus.

The simplest and clearest thing to remember about Jesus' message:

Love \_\_\_\_\_, Love \_\_\_\_\_.

2. \_\_\_\_\_ -

We build people because we believe that redeemed people can and will build a better world. Your whole life matters to God, and so your whole story matters to Terraforma.

3. \_\_\_\_\_ -

We want to help you find your place in God's unfolding story.

4. \_\_\_\_\_ -

We recognize that all people can grow in influence so we do what we can to activate their gifts, maximize their potential, and release them to build God's Kingdom in every possible way.

### III. OUR CULTURE

#### MISSION

To Empower, inspire, and release people to partner with Jesus and build a better future for all.

#### VISION

We want to create a thriving, multiplying community that joins Jesus in bringing heaven to earth. We want to transform the culture of Northern Virginia one story at a time.

#### ETHOS

##### **Love is the Movement.**

The Jesus movement is centered on love, and love should set the tone for everything that happens in the church. The love of God flows to us through Christ, and overflows as we are bound one to another and then transformed to unleash love into the world. Love is our supreme value, which manifests in the individual as a self-giving choice to act responsibly with justice, integrity, courage and forgiveness.

##### **There is room at the Table.**

We believe faith is beautiful and compelling. Terraforma is a welcoming and safe place for all, no matter where you are in your journey. We encourage you to invite your friends and neighbors. We are ready to host.

##### **Jesus Wants to Redeem Everything.**

We believe God invites us to imagine a future where everything that is broken is made beautiful and everything corrupted is made whole. We are passionate about partnering with Jesus to restore people and places. We invite you to join a countercultural movement for the common good. Empowered by the Spirit, we desire to love and serve our community as good neighbors in life-giving and creative ways.

##### **Discipleship is a Journey.**

Everyone has a next step in their spiritual journey. Terraforma desires to meet people where they are and help them find their way toward Jesus, loving them along the way. The Church is a living community that supports and encourages everyone to take their next step in spiritual growth, all while recognizing and respecting where they currently are in their spiritual journey. Discipleship is the life-long process of growth where we discover our humanity in apprenticeship to Jesus.

##### **Community is Essential.**

People grow better together as they participate in authentic community. Terraforma is passionate about

moving people from rows into circles. Faith forms family out of strangers and in this community we love, serve, and become our true selves.

**Grace is Messy but Beautiful.**

There is no need to pretend, because there is no such thing as a perfect person. The Gospel is good news for all as Jesus invites us to become who we are in His sight. Terraforma champions God's ideal, but we are at home in the middle of the mess.

**Conversation Brings Clarity.**

Theology happens best in a posture of humility and wonder. Terraforma is a place for questions, discovery, and dialogue - not just boundaries and conclusions. For this reason, we strive to hold a generous orthodoxy that listens as well as it proclaims and learns as well as it instructs.

**We Look for the Third Way.**

Whenever needed, we reject unhelpful binaries and look for a creative alternative to "this" or "that" thinking. Many difficult issues don't conform to the constraints of limits and loopholes. This was the genius behind the teaching of Jesus and it should point the way for our practice as well.

*YOU CAN FIND OUR STATEMENT OF FAITH IN THE APPENDIX.*

**IV. OUR APPROACH -**

## WE GATHER TO GROW AND SCATTER TO SERVE

1. We \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ – The Church is a living community that supports and encourages everyone to take their next step in spiritual growth.

\_\_\_\_\_ – Jesus alone can heal our lives and redeem our stories, so we will do all we can to make Him known. We work hard at Terraforma to communicate the truth of Jesus in a way that everyone can understand. Sundays at Terraforma are about helping people know Jesus.

\_\_\_\_\_ – We value discipleship in community. We think people grow better in circles than in rows, so we invite everyone to join a circle of Jesus followers as they align their lives in apprenticeship to Jesus.

2. We \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ – We carry the blessing of Jesus out of our gatherings and into our neighborhoods, loving people where they are.

\_\_\_\_\_ – Terraforma empowers and releases people to love our world, starting with our neighbors and including all in our circle of influence. We practice this by scattering to serve our community every time a month has a 5th Sunday.

\_\_\_\_\_ – We believe that all followers of Jesus have been entrusted with His mission. We strive to be a permission-giving, limit-lifting, future-dreaming movement that raises up leaders, multiplies disciples, and launches other churches and Kingdom initiatives in the marketplace.



## V. OUR STRUCTURE

### GOVERNMENT

As you consider investing your heart, time, family, and finances into the life of a church, it is important for you to feel confident in the church leadership. Our goal in sharing the details of Terraforma Church's government is that you will understand that our church is structured to support the values of integrity, accountability, and spiritual leadership.

Our Government has four groups of leaders:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_.

The Lead Pastor leads the Staff Team. This team oversees the day-to-day operations of the church. Terraforma's Staff Team serves the congregation and is responsible for the development of the spiritual life of the church and its programs.

Terraforma's current Staff are:

---



---



---



---



---

2. \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_.

The Elders are respected members of the congregation who love Terraforma Church and are responsible for the congregation's spiritual health. They focus on discipleship, spiritual growth, and prayerfully discerning God's direction with the Pastor. This group collectively operates as a plurality in humility, love, and mutual submission. Issues of doctrine, protecting church unity, and pastoral care are examples of the spiritual care provided by the elders.

Terraforma's current Elders are:

---



---



---



---



---

3. \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_.

Trustees are respected members of our congregation that love Terraforma and serve by safeguarding our church's finances. The Trustees are responsible for the financial well being of Terraforma Church. They are responsible for setting budgets, reviewing contracts, and all business and infrastructure needs for the church. The chair of the Trustees is the Treasurer.

Terraforma's current Trustees are:

---



---



---



---



---

4. \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_.

The Overseers are a group of outside ministry professionals that love Terraforma Church and its pastor and have agreed to provide oversight and accountability for the pastor. They meet regularly with the pastor to evaluate his performance and to make sure he stays healthy. **Additionally, they might be called upon to help in accountability or correction matters relating to the Lead Pastor, if requested to do so by the Staff, Elders, or Trustees.** A member of the Overseer Board will speak at Terraforma at least once a year.

Terraforma's current Overseers are:

---



---



---



---



---

## GIVING

Terraforma’s operating budget comes entirely from the generous giving of the congregation. Many of our members give a regular percentage of their income to the support of the church. Giving is one of the central themes of scripture, and so we celebrate the opportunity to give to God’s work through the local church.

***Our goal with money is to be a blessing to the world as God blesses us.***

As we openly share the honesty, integrity, and spiritual values that guide the financial practices of Terraforma Church, we believe people can focus on what God is calling them to give and trust that He is leading our church to steward it well. ***Our financial practices include:***

\_\_\_\_\_ – we are open and honest with our budgets and our books.

\_\_\_\_\_ – we have strict policies in place around receiving, spending, and accounting for all resources entrusted to us.

\_\_\_\_\_ – we give a percentage of our budget to missional expressions of God’s work through our Scatter Partners and other initiatives.

*The scriptural model for giving is:*

\_\_\_\_\_ – we hope your giving is reflected in your budget, and that you plan to give to God’s work.

\_\_\_\_\_ – we practice giving off the top.

\_\_\_\_\_ – our giving increases as our income increases.

\_\_\_\_\_ – the most important element of giving is what happens in our hearts.

\_\_\_\_\_ – at Terraforma, we want you to give to God out of gratitude, an act of worship that declares to God: “I trust you with my material needs.”

**Ways to Give:**

1. Terraforma App
2. Cash or Check in one of our services
3. Online - [terraforma.church/give](https://terraforma.church/give)
4. You can also give donations of stock, see our website for details

**Terraforma is a registered 501c3 non-profit.**

## VI. OUR FUTURE –

We hope Terraforma is a place you will call home. If this isn't the church for you, our sincere hope is to help you find the one that is. Get involved somewhere, go all-in, and join Jesus as He builds God's Kingdom! We are looking forward to an amazing future, where many people will be drawn to gather with us to grow and sent out to scatter to serve our world in love. We hope you'll join us to see this dream become reality.

### **PARTNERSHIP COVENANT:**

This is what it means to come alongside Terraforma:

#### **1. Commit to learn and live our unique ethos.**

Our Partners listen carefully to learn the unique DNA of Terraforma. We are weird for a reason! Keep your ears open and your heart soft as you learn the culture of our church and its ministry. Commit to protecting the unity of our church by acting in love toward all.

#### **2. Participate actively in our community.**

Our Partners actively participate in our community by regularly attending our services, joining a group, and finding a place to serve. Commit today to continuing with the Connections Pathway by attending Steps 2, 3, and 4. Also, our Partners give regularly and generously to Terraforma's vision. Commit to sharing the responsibility of our church by getting involved.

#### **3. Join us on mission.**

Our Partners are committed to Scatter and Serve our community in love. Terraformers don't take our 5th Sunday scatter weeks to sleep in, we are excited to get into our community to love and serve! Our Partners see themselves as sent on mission for God's Kingdom in every sphere of life! Commit to discovering your gifts and talents and putting them to work for God's Kingdom.

**Next Steps for Connections stepONE:**

**Become a Partner of Terraforma Church**

**Complete all four steps of the Connections Pathway**

- **StepONE – Welcome Home (become a partner)**
- **StepTWO – Gather to Grow**
- **StepTHREE – Discover your Design**
- **StepFOUR – Amplify your Impact**

**Install the Terraforma App to stay connected to the movement**

**Get into REALM, our church management software for communication and event registrations**

## APPENDIXES:

### I. TERRAFORMA DOCTRINE

#### OUR APPROACH TO THEOLOGY AND DOCTRINE:

Every movement has shared convictions at its core, beliefs that shape ethos and guide behavior. We find ancient creeds of the church particularly helpful in articulating the essence of orthodoxy (especially the Apostle's Creed and the Nicene Creed). These creeds connect us with the long history of Christian faith. As a community, we are concerned not only with what the creed meant in the early centuries but also its ongoing importance and relevance for faith and practice today.

As we recognize the importance of such guiding principles, we also recognize the diversity of beliefs on finer points of doctrine held by followers of the Jesus Way throughout time. This means we make space for disagreement in our community, and we take a posture of humility and generosity as we dialogue. We are committed to making sure that what matters most gets the greatest emphasis and preventing peripheral matters from distracting and dividing our community. We value conversation above conclusions, listening above lists, and dialogue over debate.

We approach theology as an ongoing conversation with God, Scripture, each other, and historic perspectives as we seek to follow Jesus authentically. Theology happens best in humble dialogue, where questions are encouraged. When Jesus was asked about the bottom line of correct belief, his summary came down to one word: LOVE (Matthew 22:37-40). The Jesus Way is the strong center of our movement and fuels our commitment to loving God and loving people. Our shared love for Jesus can hold us together despite our differences. On disputable matters, our approach is conversational, inquisitive, and accepting (This is what Paul taught in Romans 14). This means we don't all believe the exact same thing on every issue, but we remain committed to the relationship. In other words, there is room at the table for everyone who wants a seat.

We also recognize that the way we live, love, and behave is far more important than the words we put on a webpage or a statement of faith. So we invite you to experience our beliefs in action as we live into the story God is writing in our community. We want to exhibit and proclaim the Gospel in the world through our love and service - to work for the common good.

Humbly seeking Jesus,

*The Founding Board of Terraforma Church*

## THE ESSENTIALS:

### Scripture:

We believe God inspired the human authors of Scripture by His Spirit to communicate His message of redemption and revelation. The Scriptures are the authoritative and trustworthy record of divine self-disclosure. We believe this collection of stories, songs, poems, letters, histories, and moral codes weave together to form a complete story from first creation to new creation. With the help of the Spirit, we seek to interpret, contextualize, and live out this story even today.

### God:

We believe in one eternal and perfect God, revealed in the three persons of the trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God is perfect in love and is eager to be known and experienced by all, desiring both loyalty and love from all people. God has revealed himself as a loving Father that desires the best for His children.

### Jesus:

We believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God, co-equal with the Father and the Spirit. Jesus entered the human story in the incarnation, becoming fully human and living a life without sin. His death on a cross was the perfect sacrifice for the sins of all people. He rose from the dead to demonstrate His power over sin and death and to reconcile all people to God and free them from the power of sin. We look forward to His return where he will consummate the building of His Kingdom.

### The Holy Spirit:

We believe the Holy Spirit is co-equal with the Father and the Son. The Spirit is active and present in the world guiding, empowering, and correcting God's children. The Holy Spirit enables people in their search for God, revealing truth, convicting sin, and transforming lives.

### Humanity:

We believe that all people bear the Image of God and have inherent dignity and immense value, regardless of age, socio-economic status, gender, sexuality, race and ethnicity. People were created to have fellowship with God but became alienated in that relationship through sin. We believe that Jesus is reconciling people to God, to each other, and to all creation. We believe that the only answer to the problem of sin is redemption through faith in Jesus.

**Sin:**

We believe that sin began and continues as willful rebellion against God and rejection of relationship with God. We believe that sin is the source of discord, corruption, and decay that effects all creation. Sin disrupts harmony with God and erodes all human relationships. Jesus came to give His followers abundant and overflowing life, and to rescue them from the power of sin as well as from sin's penalty.

**The Church:**

We believe the Church is the global gathering of Christ Followers, called to be hands and feet of Jesus in the world. Though it has multitudes of diverse expressions, the Church consists of all who have a relationship with Jesus. The primary purpose of the Church is to advance the Kingdom of God. The Church has a clear scriptural mandate to look beyond its own community to the neighborhood, the nation, and the world as a whole in a posture of love and service. Mission is not a program in the church but an essential identity of the Church. The Church is the missionary people of God sent into all of life to accomplish His purposes.

**The Kingdom of God:**

The Kingdom of God is any place or person where the rule and reign of Jesus Christ is expressed and experienced. We believe Jesus inaugurated the Kingdom of God in His bodily ministry on the earth and continues to establish it by the Spirit through the Church today. We live in between the inauguration and completion of The Kingdom. God's Kingdom exists eternally in heaven and finds reflection on earth. As God's children, we have been invited to envision and establish God's Kingdom on the earth, building a better future for all. The consummation of the Kingdom will be fulfilled when Jesus returns. Although we believe in eternal life with God, we don't focus on escaping to the afterlife. We see the reality of heaven as a motivating force to inspire us to actively build a better world here and now. This includes protecting and restoring the Earth and the value and dignity of life upon it.



## II. SCRIPTURAL MODEL FOR GIVING

### 1. We give to support the local church.

1 Corinthians 9:13-14 – <sup>13</sup> Don't you know that those who serve in the temple get their food from the temple, and that those who serve at the altar share in what is offered on the altar? <sup>14</sup> In the same way, the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel.

Paul roots the concept of church support in the New Testament in the concept of Old Testament “tithing,” a system that supported the function of the temple and provided for the priests. Paul communicates that it is appropriate for those who work to preach the gospel to earn their living doing so. In the Old Testament, the operation of the temple rested on this system: the ones that facilitate worship in the temple feed their families on the gifts brought to the temple in worship to God. This is the origin of system for supporting the leaders of the church with the gifts of the church members. But giving to the local church is more than just giving to support the pastors and staff that facilitate the programs of the church. It is also giving to the work of God in the world, which comes *through* the ministry of the church. Sometimes the church gets criticized for being an “inefficient charity,” because a large percentage of its money goes to church services and programs instead of to helping the poor like a food bank or orphanage. Now, our church does those kinds of things, too, but we want to challenge this assumption. We think the local church, especially a good church, is the best charity there is. What the church does with all its programs is make disciples – it teaches people to walk in the ways of Jesus and to live out the mission of Jesus into their culture. Saying the church is a “bad charity” is like saying a medical school is a bad hospital: we are in the business of helping transform people – people that leave the church and go into their culture on mission. If the church is doing its job, it should be helping selfish people caught up in greed, gain, and materialism become missional servants known for compassion and generosity. Who do you think started all the food banks, orphanages, hospitals, free clinics, and such? MANY of these programs and institutions were started by disciples of Jesus. And that is what the church makes. So, the church is behind MUCH more actual help to the world than it gets direct credit for. Remember, our goal with money is to be a blessing to the world as God blesses us. Maybe the best way to do this is to support the ministry of making disciples in your local church.

### 2. We give to support each other.

1 Corinthians 16:2 – <sup>2</sup> On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with your income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made.

The situation here is not that of regular church giving, like that used to support the teachers and pastors, but one of a mercy offering – a gift to help someone in crisis. This might answer some of the questions about “how” giving was done in the early church. “*On the 1st day of the week, set aside a sum of money in keeping with your income.*” They were expected 2,000 years ago to budget and plan with their money to help meet the needs of other people. This is not haphazard or random, but something planned and prioritized. It comes out 1st, and it increases as our income increases. This means giving should be **proportional**. This doesn't happen by accident, it only happens when we prioritize it and plan for it. This is about being available to help when people around you run into trouble. This would include giving to charities that help people and causes of social justice. In the scripture, there is a special emphasis on helping widows and orphans – taking care of vulnerable people with no one else to take care of them.

### 3. We give as an act of worship and thanksgiving to God.

*2 Corinthians 9:6-15 – <sup>6</sup> Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. <sup>7</sup> Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. <sup>8</sup> And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.*

This passage is about the same situation Paul was talking about in [1 Corinthians 16](#): a collection is being taken in Greece and Macedonia to help the impoverished believers in Jerusalem. Here, Paul gets to the most important element of giving: **what happens or is supposed to happen in our hearts**. We have clichés that hint at this: “It’s better to give than receive” and so on. We say this, but if we are honest, we don’t always believe it. Sometimes it hurts to give. This is the root of the problem we have with money, and here Paul gives us good medicine. We have a hard time giving because we love money. Paul teaches here to give generously and cheerfully. This happens only in a heart where the ownership issue is settled. From this kind of heart, giving is an act of mercy to the needy and an act of thanksgiving to God. The most important part of our relationship with money is our motivation and allegiance. It is about surrender. We don’t give grudgingly because we have surrendered my resources to God (or better, we recognize they are His to begin with!). The talk in this passage about prosperity should not be viewed as a strategy for gain. This shouldn’t be understood as “give to God so He will make me rich.” That attitude is exactly the opposite of what this is about. It is about a reality of peace and surrender and generosity that goes DEEP in our hearts; so that we don’t just do the right things with money but we feel the right way about money.

#### **So, a New Testament picture of giving looks something like this:**

**It is regular (habitual).** Giving is not impulsive. It is not something you make emotional decisions on, based on the manipulative pleas of a fundraiser. It is something you plan and prioritize. Giving is a budget priority, but it is in the budget. It is not “leftovers.”

**It is joyful.** What happens in the heart is an act of surrender and worship to God. It feels good, because there is life in surrender. Your heart rejoices to be a part of God’s Kingdom work. It is not something you do reluctantly, but something you do enthusiastically.

**It is generous.** What is generous? Well, in the Old Testament, the “tax” system of tithing that went to support the temple and the poor was 10% of your wealth or goods. When we define what “generous” looks like now and in our lives, we should take this into account.