

*Here at Heritage, we're ...*

## Reaching Out

Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:6; Acts 1:8

**Faith is a personal thing,  
but it is not a private thing.**

Faith is personal. Each person who truly recognizes that Jesus is who He claims to be in the Bible has a personal relationship with Him. That person's sins are forgiven and can have free and open fellowship with God. The question is, then, "How does a person come to faith?"

To answer that question, we turn to the Bible. It says, "Faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the Word of Christ." (Romans 10:18)

It also says, "For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe." (1 Corinthians 1:21)

And furthermore, it says that faith in Jesus doesn't come through doing good things: "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast." (Ephesians 2:8-9)

So, as those who have heard the Word of Christ, we are compelled by the Bible and convicted by the Holy Spirit that we are to do something in response to the gift of faith we have received. We are to reach out to those around us and share about our faith with them so that they, too, might have an opportunity for a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

**Goal: Newcomers will become  
Members.**

### What is a Member?

*A member is a follower of Jesus who has made an official commitment to the local church, demonstrated by regular attendance, participation in ministries, proportional giving, helping to assimilate newcomers, and general involvement in the life and activities of the church.*

## Making Connections

1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Hebrews 10:24-25

**Being a follower of Jesus is personal,  
but not individual;  
(even the Lone Ranger had Tonto).**

This is such a fun part of being a member of a church; connecting with others for mutual encouragement, strengthening, support, and just plain having a good time together.

From the very beginning of the church, the Bible tells us that this common connection of those who were part of the community of faith was the norm. It tells us that in the early church "they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. ... And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved." (Acts 2:42, 46-47)

At Heritage we do this Connecting in lots of ways. We gather together to worship; we minister to one another; we enjoy studying the Scriptures; we pray together; we love to eat together; and we even have people that enjoy taking vacations together.

We know, however, that this stage in the lives of churches tends to become the default mode of operation, they tend to become inwardly focused, so we stress the need for balancing Making Connections with Reaching Out on the one hand and Becoming Ambassadors for Christ on the other.

**Goal: Members will become  
Ambassadors for Christ.**

### What is an Ambassador for Christ?

*Ambassadors are authentic, bold, resilient, God-focused members who use their gifts to minister both in the church and beyond; making an impact in the overall life of the church and also making an impact in the community.*

## Becoming Ambassadors for Christ

2 Corinthians 5:11-21

**As our faith grows, we step into the office  
God has designed for us as maturing  
followers of Jesus.**

Again, we turn to the Bible for our motivation and direction to move toward this goal. It says, "You've all been to the stadium and seen the athletes race. Everyone runs; one wins. Run to win. All good athletes train hard. They do it for a gold medal that tarnishes and fades. You're after one that's gold eternally." (1 Corinthians 9:24-25 MESSAGE)

Our desire is that we would see people enter this race the Bible speaks about to achieve real growth in their faith.

They run this race not as individuals, however, but in community. This is accomplished by helping others along as they progress in the race, and by encouraging still others who aren't yet followers of Jesus to enter the race themselves.

Ambassadors demonstrate the love of Christ as they mentor members within the church, modeling what it is to grow in their faith.

They also demonstrate His love as they serve outside the four walls of the church, ministering in the community and touching lives, being the only Jesus some will ever see.

**Goal: Ambassadors will encourage  
others toward a life of faith.**

Reaching Out

**Making Connections**

**Becoming Ambassadors  
for Christ**

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**All this brings us full-circle to  
Reaching Out once again.**

We don't think of this progression from non-members/newcomers to members and on to ambassadors for Christ as a series of plateaus or levels of faith. We just consider this a simple means of explaining the life-enriching and ever-growing upward spiral of our lives as followers of Jesus; a continuum of life and growth in faith and maturity in Christ as we connect to His church and interact with our community.

**And we do all this for God's glory,  
and that one day we might be able to  
say with the Apostle Paul,**

*"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have remained faithful. And now the prize awaits me—the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on the day of his return. And the prize is not just for me but for all who eagerly look forward to his appearing."*  
(2 Timothy 4:7-8 NLT)

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*Heritage Church is a congregation of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church*