

GOALS

In the next chapter of Upper Room, we will unapologetically focus on a few specific goals that have emerged from our communal conversation:

1. **FOSTER** a sense of family and belonging, where people can know and be known,
2. **CATALYZE** guides who equip people in their next steps spiritually,
3. **BUILD** missional bridges to our neighbors in Minneapolis, and
4. **INTENSIFY** our loving of the unconvinced in the 3 spaces: the weekly worship space, the daily marketplace, and the places we enter by invitation only.

FOSTER Point Leader: Kathy Jones

Description:

Foster a sense of family and belonging, where people can know and be known.

Inspiration:

This goal is driven by the vision of a young woman who comes to a Sunday night gathering, having recently lost her mother to breast cancer. At one of our community meals, she meets a woman whose children have all left home; they strike up a great conversation and meet for coffee later that week. Over time, a relationship develops in which the two women care for and encourage one another – part of a new church family.

Expanded Thoughts:

We desire to be a people connected to one another – a community whose mission of love to the world is an outgrowth of the love we have for one another. Our first and best testament to the reality of love will be the ways we interact within the church.

We desire to create an environment where the generations intermingle. We will listen to and be a part of one another's stories. With open ears and eyes, we'll know when to help carry another's burdens. Celebrate one another's victories and mourn one another's losses. We'll speak words of wisdom when needed and lovingly approach conflict as it arises. It is by our unity and love for one another that people will collide with the love of Christ.

Biblical Connection:

John 19:25-27: "Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, 'Dear woman, here is your son,' and to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.' From that time on, the disciple took her into his home."

John 17:23: "I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me."

Implementation Highlights:

- Community meals between the gatherings, as a time for relationship-building between those staying after or coming early to attend worship
- Prayer cards in the gatherings to help receive and highlight requests in our community, so that people can be praying for one another, during the gathering and throughout the week
- Faith stories in the gathering from people in the community
- A connection card in the gathering, so that people will know the names of those they're sitting by
- For more detailed information on practical care, support resources and pastoral ministry, *please read the Community Life Ministry Action Plan.*

CATALYZE Point Leader: Jon Klinepeter

Description:

Catalyze guides who equip people in their next steps spiritually.

Inspiration:

This goal is inspired by Homeless Connect, a bi-annual event at the Convention Center. Homeless people are greeted at the door by a guide who helps assess their needs: "Do you require medical care? Want to find a job? Need to see a dentist?" The guide then takes their homeless friend to different booths located all over the Convention Center, that are staffed and resourced by individuals and organizations that are designed to help each person take transformative next steps. The event is summed up by the phrase: "Being made better by working together."

Expanded Thoughts:

Our desire is to create a Spiritual Connect that allows every person in our community to take their next step. To be disciplined through:

- assessments to help individuals identify their unique next steps,
- training guides who can prayerfully support and direct individuals toward resources, and
- certain next step resources that will be developed by Upper Room and others that will be provided by organizations and churches we are in partnership with.

We want to be a community that equips people to become self-feeders and feeders of others, growing in both faith and spiritual maturity. We believe that every person is capable of this – from the children or youth among us to the person who is just beginning to explore Jesus' teachings.

Biblical Connection:

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

John 4:27-36: "Meanwhile, the disciples were urging Jesus, 'Rabbi, eat something.' But Jesus replied, 'I have a kind of food you know nothing about.' 'Did someone bring him food while we were gone?' the disciples asked one another. Then Jesus explained: 'My

nourishment comes from doing the will of God, who sent me, and from finishing his work. You know the saying, ‘Four months between planting and harvest.’ But I say, wake up and look around. The fields are already ripe for harvest. The harvesters are paid good wages, and the fruit they harvest is people brought to eternal life. What joy awaits both the planter and the harvester alike!’”

Implementation Highlights:

- **May-December ‘09:** Lead a process that involves our community in uncovering a Biblical definition of discipleship that will then inform the role of a guide in our community
- **October ‘09:** Launch Version 1.0 of the toolbox, initial resources for individuals to begin pursuing their next steps spiritually
- **January ‘10:** Define the role of a guide and begin recruitment and development of those who wish to serve in this capacity
- For more detailed information on how we hope to implement this goal, *please read the Discipleship Ministry Action Plan.*

BUILD Point Leader: Kurt Vickman

Description:

Build missional bridges to our neighbors in Minneapolis.

Inspiration:

On August 1, 2007, the 35W Bridge collapsed, and in doing so, separated one part of our city from another. This image is a reminder of other economic, ethnic and religious divides that separate one people group from another. It is our desire to be a community of faith that rebuilds those fallen bridges through ongoing relational connectedness and daily servanthood.

Expanded Thoughts:

We desire to become an incarnational presence in a single geographic location, partnering with individuals, churches and non-profits in that locale. That we would move toward the most pressing humanitarian needs within that area, and innovate new initiatives that serve those needs. We hope that these intensified missional experiences and relationships will lead to daily missional lives.

We desire to be a community:

- known by loving action, as we seek to selflessly serve others,
- known by our ability to listen and learn, and
- known for the diversity of our relationships, as we rub shoulders with those whose ethnic, economic and educational backgrounds differ from our own.

Biblical Connection:

Matthew 25:35-36,40: “‘For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison

and you came to visit me... Whatever you did for one of the least of these, you did for me.””

Implementation Highlights:

- Reconvene the local partnership team from this past year to begin the vision initiation process for our local partnership. (Spring / Summer 2009)
- Invite the broader community to respond to the partnership team’s first draft of the vision for a local partnership (Fall 2009).
- For more detailed information on our global partnerships, global experiences and how we hope to implement this goal, *please read the Missional Living Ministry Action Plan.*

INTENSIFY Point Leader: Craig Joseph

Description:

Intensify our loving of the unconvinced in the 3 spaces: the weekly worship space, the daily marketplace, and the places we enter by invitation only..

Inspiration:

This goal is borne out of experiences with very real people: The man who showed up one Sunday wearing an “ATHEIST” tee shirt, who left feeling welcomed in a way he never expected. The young woman at the corporate office who pulled her UR co-worker into a cubicle to pray because she sensed something genuinely faithful. And the local actor who invited a UR attendee to his cast party, among the arts community in Minneapolis.

Expanded Thoughts:

We desire to be a community that loves all of the above people with no strings attached. Regardless of what you believe or how you behave, our community will be welcoming of all. We also desire to be a community of truth, increasingly courageous at stepping out and speaking our faith within the context of loving friendships. We want to couple loving actions with intentional words.

We have deconstructed the ways we share our faith, shying away from the word “evangelism” because of its negative connotations. Into the future, we desire to be intentional in:

- Using language that is not exclusive to the Christian sub-culture,
- Equipping people with a posture and tools for verbally sharing their faith,
- Raising up a community of “anthropologists” who know how to interact with the story of God **already** present in the culture of the unconvinced, and
- Moving beyond only inviting people to our weekly worship space toward being trusted people of character in the daily marketplace who receive invitations into the spaces of the unconvinced.

Biblical Connection:

Matthew 18:12-14: “If a man owns a hundred sheep, and one of the wanders away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go to look for the one that wandered off? And if he finds it, I tell you the truth, he is happier about that one sheep than about the

ninety-nine that did not wander off. In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these should wander off.”

Acts 17:16-19: “While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols. So he reasoned in the synagogue (1st Space) with the Jews and God-fearing Greeks, as well as in the marketplace (2nd Space) day by day with those who happened to be there. A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers ... took him and brought him to a meeting of the Areopagus, where they said to him, ‘May we know what this new teaching is that your are presenting?’”

Implementation Highlights:

- Tell stories in our gatherings that highlight people’s 2nd and 3rd space interactions
- Create a first space that welcomes all with hospitality and friendliness from the time they enter until the time they depart
- Create marking moments that cause people to answer Jesus' question, “Who do you say that I am?”
- Use serving opportunities on the missional bridge as an entry point for people new to our community who are “kicking the tires” of faith.