

*"We have a compulsion
to testify and spread
the Gospel"*

*-Bishop Ray R. Sutton
Presiding Bishop*



The Front Porch

LENT 2019 • REC 100 NEWS

A background image showing green plants and grass with several US dollar bills (including \$100 and \$20 bills) scattered throughout, suggesting a theme of giving or financial support.

GIVE 100
Lenten offering 2019

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Special insert:

Board of Foreign Missions update

REC Canon Missioners



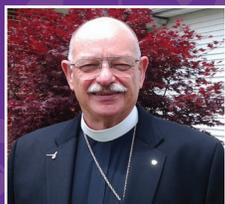
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Diocese of Mid-America

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LENTEN OFFERING 2019

By: Fr. Jason Grote

A sower went out to sow his seed”

On Sexagesima Sunday (the week this newsletter is being distributed), the Gospel lesson (Luke 8) is that of the sower who went out sowing his seed and the seed fell on various types of soils and had varying results. Of course, the Scriptures tell us that the seed is the Word of God. The seed is Jesus Christ being sown into the world.

As I reflect on this parable, I realize that this is precisely the ministry of the Church – of every single local parish. Every parish is the seed of Jesus Christ being sown by God into the world. And as each parish of good soil matures and bears fruit an hundred-fold (as our Lord says), it inevitably produces more seed that is planted. This is how God has chosen to grow His kingdom. It is through the sowing and planting of parishes that faithfully testify and spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ. How vital the local parish is in the great work and harvest of God in the world!

To this end, the Reformed Episcopal Church continues the work of the Lord by sowing and supporting new parishes throughout North America. Three existing parishes have planted new works and missions and there is another seeking ways to do the same. We’ve had a new parish transfer into the REC and another that is considering affiliation. Three new plants in new areas are also in the beginning stages. This is to say – God is blessing our labors. We ask for your continued support of prayer, your personal ministry in your local parish, and your financial support through the annual Lenten Offering.

The inaugural Lenten offering of 2018 was more than encouraging. I’ll admit that there is always some nail-biting that happens when launching into something new. It’s hard to know what to expect let alone developing

a new way of doing things. But one thing remains true amidst all those uncertainties – the Lord is good all the time!

The first Lenten offering received more than \$104,000. It is simply amazing how each of our \$100 contributions can multiply more than a thousand-fold – and this is just the beginning. We praise the Lord that Bishop Grote learned of this model and desired to implement it for REC church planting. Your offerings are already supporting the ministries of Fr. Sigfrido as he plants a Latino mission in Katy, TX and Fr. Michael Vinson who continues to grow the new parish in Rockwall, TX. Additionally, significant commitments apart from the Lenten Offering have been made to help support the initial needs of planting a new mission in northwest Atlanta.

This year, we encourage everyone to participate in ‘giving a hundred’ to the Lord. Adults are asked to make their annual \$100 donation. Children and those who can’t contribute a full \$100 are asked to ‘give a hundred’ in other ways (i.e., a hundred coins, a hundred prayers throughout Lent, a hundred conversations centered around church planting and Gospel sharing). If we all participate, we would raise more than double the 2018 offering. This would enable us to continue our current commitments and help support the new Atlanta plant, a new plant in Covington, Louisiana and other new plants as determined by each Diocesan Bishop.

REC100 has provided every parish with Lenten offering brochures and bookmarks with the REC100 prayer on them. Please take one of each and keep the ministry and work of REC100, our Bishops, Canon Missioners, and (most especially) our church planters close to your heart.

“And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundred-fold”

For more information and resources about REC 100 please visit us at www.REC100.org



All Adults are asked to
GIVE \$100 during Lent.

Youth are asked to give 100 in other creative ways, some ideas include:

- 100 COINS OR PENNIES • 100 PRAYERS FOR REC 100
- SELL 100 CUPS OF LEMONADE TO BENEFIT REC100
- CONTRIBUTE 100 MINUTES OF SERVICE TO YOUR CHURCH

Your **Generous**
2018 support of
REC 100 raised
\$104,000



Your offerings are supporting Fr. Sigfrido Latino Mission in Katy, TX



Your offerings are supporting Fr. Vinson in Rockwall, TX

“Mission is from everywhere to everywhere.” – Bishop Michael Nazir-Ali

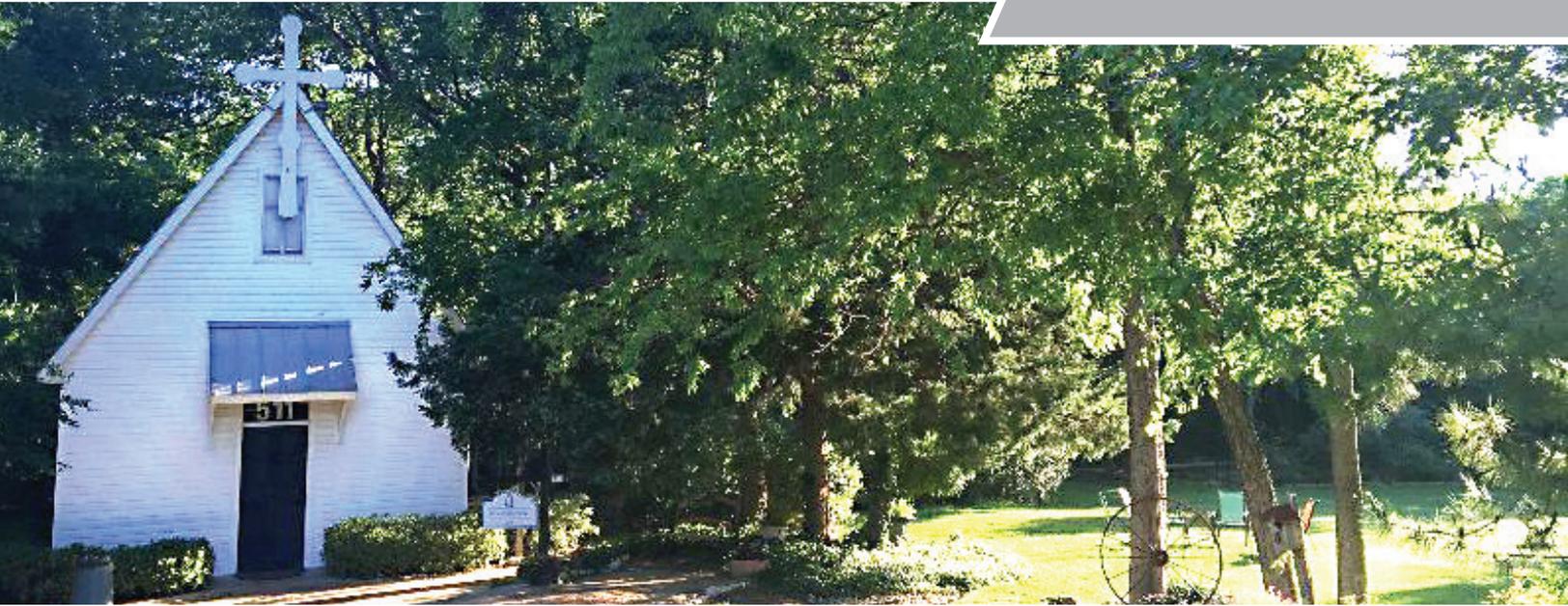
this is only the beginning! The REC continues to grow with new parishes and plant possibilities in:

Grand Junction, CO • Atlanta, GA • Covington, LA • Westminster, MD • Williamsport, PA
Martin, TN • Rockwall, TX • Lexington, VA Latino Mission: Katy, TX

Almighty Lord, Triune God of the harvest, we thank you for the Great Commission of your Only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ. By His command to spread the Good News, we are led at this time to a particular vision of planting 100 new missions and parishes in the Reformed Episcopal Church. We ask for your favor, grace, and the anointing of the Holy Spirit to fulfill the Gospel call that many might come to know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. We humbly petition you for the workers of the harvest as well as the funding required to support them. Mindful that without your help we can do nothing, we pray for your hand of blessing to be upon us for your glory; in the Name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen.

Reflections of a Church Planter

By: *The Rev. Michael D. Vinson*



Two years ago Fr. Michael Templin and I were called to begin an REC100 mission effort in Rockwall Texas, an affluent lakeside suburb located twenty miles east of Dallas. It's a community comprised of middle to upper class families surrounded by all the usual amenities: coffee shops, restaurants, nail salons, health clubs, and plenty of retail shopping. If one were to create a word-picture to define our lakeside culture words like comfort, fun, sports, young, fitness, possessions, and image would be spot on. There also exists a prevailing and assumed Christian culture; most people identify as Christian (predominantly Baptist and Methodist) and attend a local church with varying degrees of frequency. It's a good and beautiful place filled with people that share common hopes and desires, but also struggle with the sin and pains of life caused by the Fall.

In reflecting upon the last two years of church-planting, I clearly recognize how near God has been and how intimately he has guided our labor to establish his church for the salvation of souls and to the praise of his most Holy name. Here, at the beginning of our third year, I would like to share what I have learned over these last two years.

From nothing

When we first began, Fr. Templin and I were alone (save our immediate families). Our work of church planting would begin ex nihilo... from nothing! We needed to find a way to begin engaging people, opportunities for the people of Rockwall to engage with Anglican priests in a community not used to cassocked clergy. By the Lord's providence he supplied an unexpected solution through a beautiful and historic building right in the heart of where we desired to plant a church called The Legacy Antiquities Christian Library. The Library would become our launching pad; from there we began holding public lectures and teaching series on topics such as the liturgical season of Lent. We also coordinated a three day teaching on Christian worship with particular focus on the

Liturgy and the Daily Offices. I leaned on the gifts and talents of my fellow Dallas Clergymen. Fr. John Boonzaaijer, Fr. Thom Smith, and Fr. Charles Erlandson, each contributed to the larger picture of Anglicanism I was beginning to paint in hopes that the Anglican way of life would draw the people of Rockwall to the Catholic faith and tradition we so dearly cherish.

We began to attract the unchurched, de-churched, and many curious Christians from other branches of Christ's church. Some began attending every scheduled event, even bringing friends to "see and hear these priests." Sometimes ten, twenty, and as much as twenty-five people would attend, attentive and ready with questions. Over our first year of public ministry we interacted and engaged over three hundred people, many of whom shared a deep desire to fill a spiritual void, something missing from the Christian life: "Surely there is something more?" Library acquaintances progressed to dinner guests and deeper conversations. Our home became a good place to explore questions, share stories, and build deeper relationships. I began explaining the Book of Common Prayer to many of our dinner guests who showed interest in Prayer Book Spirituality, a Rule of Life, Sacrament, and Liturgy. We eventually incorporated our new friends into our time of Evening Prayer, teaching in the intimacy of our home. In time, we had a handful of people keeping the Offices, growing in their new found Anglicanism, and telling everyone they knew about the spiritual pearl they had found.

Prayer book spirituality

By the beginning of the second year our growing friendship with the Library afforded the opportunity to begin publicly keeping the Evening Prayer Office on Sunday evenings. So, on the first Sunday of January 2018, we committed to weekly prayer with a sermon, followed by Catechesis within the Library. We began to order ourselves according to Prayer Book spirituality and called ourselves The Anglican Oratory of Lake Ray Hubbard. We weren't

yet a mission, and certainly not a parish, but we were committed to keeping the Rule, growing through catechesis, and ministering to the needs of our community. We aspired to keep the Office with reverence, seriousness, and beauty. Music was also extremely important to us because we wanted to draw others in with the beauty and sanctity that is particular to a traditional Anglican service of worship. Under the guidance of Mr. Andrew Dittman (Choirmaster at the Chapel of the Cross) and Addison Vinson, an a capella quartet comprised of University of North Texas vocal performance majors was formed. This allowed us to sing the office hymns, canticles, and plainchant portions of the Office. By Palm Sunday, our average attendance hovered around twenty and often we would fill out the space. Our season of ministry at the Library was fruitful. On Easter, just some three months after committing to Sunday gatherings, we saw our first confirmation as well as the reception of a new member into the REC.

Altar-centered Life

After Easter we sensed it was time to begin celebrating Holy Communion and to find a larger space. Once again, the Lord provided by leading us to Joy Lutheran Church. With this move we officially changed our name to St. Benedict's Anglican Oratory (www.stbenedictanglican.com). The beautifully adorned sanctuary, organ, and altar allowed us to begin weekly Holy Communion services. The new location elevated the music and liturgy. Transition and growth allowed further opportunities for lay ministry on the altar guild and hospitality committees. We trained three men as acolyte/epistolers and several others as lay readers. It was quite common for people to come to our home for dinner after Holy Communion and Catechesis. These were special times which proved invaluable to deepening our fellowship and common mission. At the end of last year, St. Benedict's was blessed to hold its first Baptism with nearly one-hundred in attendance, many of whom, had never attended a traditional Anglican service. During our time spent at Joy Lutheran, the Lord brought over two hundred unique people to worship and catechesis some who have joined us and others who still visit frequently.

what I've Learned

So what have I learned over these past two years? Quite a bit about people, church-planting, and myself:

Trust The Liturgy: One of the first things Bishop Sutton told me was "to trust the Liturgy." And he is right: the three-fold way of daily prayer, private devotion, and weekly Eucharist is the foundation, the stability and the well from which any and all ministry flows. The entirety of our ideas, strategies, and engagements must finally lead others to the altar, into the mystical union found in the bread and wine, into Christ Jesus who alone can transform and shape the soul.

Beauty Speaks: Aesthetics matter. Beauty matters. Deliberate and thoughtful choices in space, location, music, art, image, photography, fonts, form, language... all of these matter because they inform the grander ethos, the things that say without words 'who we are,' 'what we're about,' and 'what's important' to us. Do

not underestimate the power with which beauty communicates through a transcendent language, and it is this language that speaks directly to the soul.

Bigger Nets Catch More Fish: 'Front Porch' ministries are essential; we must meet people where they're at if we're to bring them onto the porch and hopefully, to the table. The Library I previously referenced has been an extremely strategic forum to engage new people. Our local cigar shop has hosted a bi-weekly men's book club we call The Mens Theological Think Tank. We hold Pub Nights, Spring and Fall Readers Groups, and anything else we can identify as a good way to enlarge our net. And, by the way, nets work. From these ministries came our first group of Anglicans, many of whom now serve as our core church planting team. In fact, one of them is studying and preparing to become our deaconess. God be praised!

You Cannot Do This Alone: No process of identifying, preparing, and sending a church-planter is perfect. But in my case, I would not have wanted any other process. First, I entered into the postulancy through my home parish (The Chapel of the Cross, Dallas), where I served my diaconate and priestly curacy under the love, discipline, and wisdom of Fr. John Boonzaaijer, to whom I am forever indebted. Whatever is good and honoring in relation to my priestly ministry I owe directly to him, the many years he guided and cared for me, and not just for my sake, but for the flock of Christ's church whom I would one day shepherd. Furthermore, being sent as a church planter with the love and support of our home parish has made all the difference in every area of ministry and family life.

I am also very grateful to every REC member who gave towards last year's REC 100 Lenten Offering, a portion of which our Bishop and Cannon Missioners have decided to provide financial support to allow me to enter into full time ministry at the mission of St. Benedict's. My wife and I are humbled and grateful for the support and opportunity for me to focus my attention solely on this church-plant.

What Will God Do? After a year of holding weekly evening services the Lord has brought us to a new place: The Little Wren Chapel located less than a mile from Joy Lutheran Church. And with this move we have begun Sunday morning worship and catechesis. This is a tremendous blessing and opportunity to become more accessible to new visitors and a welcomed change for our regular attenders.

Thus begins the next chapter in the life of St. Benedict's. With Sunday morning worship beautifully situated amidst green lawns and bountiful gardens we are positioned to see God move in our midst. What will he do? Well, if the past two years are any indication, he will do the unimaginable and unexpected. He will challenge and surprise. He will transform every aspect of our lives and bring many souls into his church. And, through his works, we will know he is near.

*Until Christ be formed in us all,
The Rev. Michael D. Vinson
Priest in Charge, St. Benedict's Anglican Oratory*

REC 100 Retreat

By: Fr. Jason Grote



REC100 is set to have its annual meeting on May 1st. All of our Bishops, Canon Missioners, and Church planters are invited to join us as we worship & pray, share our experiences, and have a time of learning. Our keynote speaker this year will be Canon Dan Alger. Canon Dan is the Canon for Church Planting in the Anglican Church in North America and involved with the Church Planting Network of GAFCON. He presented a wonderful teaching at the Diocese of Mid-America Synod in 2018 on the Biblical and Sacramental understanding of Mission and we are excited to learn from him again at this REC100 retreat. This year, Canon Dan has been asked to speak on the building up and strengthening of core groups within the context of church-planting. The retreat will take place on Wednesday, May 1st, at the headquarters of the Southeast in Summerville, SC (near Charleston). If you plan to attend or need more details regarding transportation and hotel details, please contact Fr. Jason.

Covington, LA Plant

By: Deacon Andrew Voelkel



*Greetings in the name of God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

I want to introduce myself and my family to our new Reformed Episcopal Church family, and to let you know of our plans to participate in REC100 church planting efforts, under the leadership of Bishop Ray Sutton.

After serving in pastoral ministry for 15 years in Reformed and Presbyterian churches in Saint Louis Missouri, Baton Rouge Louisiana, and Missoula Montana, and after years of growing in appreciation of historic Christian liturgy and polity, I, together with my wife, Carol, and our six children, Andrew Jr. (Drew), Caleb, James, Luke, Hannah and Sarah, transitioned into the Anglican Church of North America and have returned to my “home town” of Covington, LA to live, work and minister in proximity to family.

As I did after receiving my Bachelor of Science degree from Auburn University and before receiving my Master of Divinity from Covenant Theological Seminary, I am working again in Commercial Construction, serving as an Estimator and Project Manager with Voelkel McWilliams Construction, our family-based Design-Build Company. And I am also serving as a transitional Deacon, under Fr. Randy Toms, at Saint Paul’s Anglican Church (REC) in Baton Rouge, where my family has been received into membership.

It is our desire to proclaim Christ and pursue God’s kingdom in our community. While we continue to provide construction services and attend Saint Paul’s Anglican Church, we are beginning to establish an Anglican Fellowship in Covington that will, by God’s grace, grow into an REC Mission parish. The Lord is already blessing the seeds of our labors as we have recently been granted permission to use a beautiful church building in Covington for Sunday Evening Prayer Services as set forth in our Book of Common Prayer.

Having served as a minister under both Presbyterian and Congregational forms of church governance, I am glad to now be an Anglican, where I am more deeply rooted in the historic church and supported by a local diocese and Bishop. And, in the midst of our ongoing culture wars, I am especially grateful to be a member of the REC, which has clearly and faithfully articulated, through various resolutions our Christian positions concerning Sexual Ethics, the Sanctity of Human Life and Gender Distinctions.

Please remember the Voelkel family in prayer, along with Saint Paul’s Anglican Church and other faithful Louisiana Anglicans, as we seek to honor God, serve our communities, and make disciples for Jesus Christ in the Anglican Way.

We are more than thrilled to introduce you our newest REC100 church planting family – Fr. Tony & Vandi Melton and their children Samuel, Beckett, and Rosemary. The Meltons have been worshipping and serving with Fr. John Boonzaaijer at The Chapel of the Cross in Dallas, Texas where, for the past 9 years, Fr. Tony has been instrumental as a teacher and headmaster at The Chapel's classical school, The St. Timothy School. The Lord has now led them to embrace the REC100 church planting vision and, after several months of consideration and evaluation, we are excited to announce that they are accepting a call to plant a parish in the Atlanta, Georgia area.

According to Bishop Al Gadsden, although the city of Atlanta was named in what was once titled “The Charleston-Atlanta-Charlotte Synod” (now known as the Diocese of the Southeast), this plant, he believes, will be the first Reformed Episcopal parish established in the Atlanta area!!

Atlanta and its suburbs provide a great opportunity for planting and growing this new REC parish. If you didn't know, the Atlanta-metro area has the nation's 5th largest population and is home to the world headquarters of many companies like Coca Cola, Home Depot, Chick-fil-A, UPS, and more. We are thrilled that the Lord has been opening doors of opportunity for this new plant and we pray that He will open even more doors for Atlanta-area parishes in the years to come. Please pray for this plant and for the Melton Family as they relocate this summer. And, as a final word, you may note that two of our most recent planters have come from The Chapel of the Cross in Dallas. We must thank and praise God for their spirit of mission and for raising up faithful church planters. – Fr. Jason Grote

A word from Fr. Tony –

The Melton family is excited to plant the next REC100 church in Kennesaw, Georgia! Kennesaw is a northwest suburb of Atlanta. The parish will eventually serve the towns of Acworth, North Marietta, Woodstock, and other surrounding areas.

The plan, as it now stands, is to move in mid-July to southern Kennesaw, allowing us quick access to our four focus areas: 1) Kennesaw State University and its 38,000 students; 2) North Marietta, where our children will attend The Stonehaven School; 3) the city of Acworth, home of our partners in the plant, Fr. Josh Grote and his wife, Suzanne; and 4) our residence.

Local friends and supporters have already started gathering interest for events featuring food, teaching, and discussion. These events will quickly connect us with people, and will, hopefully,



(Clockwise) Rosemary, Vandi, Tony, Samuel, and Beckett

gather a group of people seeking God! Ideally, a bible study will emerge from these relationships and from the networking that naturally happens when moving to a new place. Also, it will be my aim to pray the Daily Office every morning at Kennesaw State University, inviting many of the students to begin the day with prayer. I'll also end the day with Evensong at our home for any that care to join. Of course, God will present many other ways to meet the people that He has chosen, and He will prepare their hearts for the ministry of the Gospel. Our job is to be available at all times to preach the Good News and to love those heavy-laden with sin. As these relationships deepen through discipleship we'll begin to build ourselves into a formal mission parish.

You may be wondering how you can help. First and foremost, you can pray. Nothing succeeds without the Lord's blessing. Pray that God would prepare the hearts of lost people, and orchestrate the way that we can bring the Gospel to them. Pray that the transition to Kennesaw would be smooth for my family, especially my wife and three kids. Pray that I would have favor with Kennesaw State University that the Gospel might break onto that campus in a mighty way. Secondly, please forward to me any contacts that you know in the northwest Atlanta area surrounding Kennesaw. (thmelton@hotmail.com) It is a great honor to serve God in the Reformed Episcopal Church, and my hope is that this church plant will be used by Him for the salvation of souls, the discipleship of the uncatechized, and the establishment of historic Anglicanism in this part of the country!

Reformed Episcopal values

Traditional Anglicanism

- Ancient & Historic Model of the Church as expressed through the Formularies of the English Reformation regarding Faith & Order
- Doctrinal Standards of the Reformed Episcopal Church:
 - The Holy Scripture as God's inerrant, infallible & unchangeable Word
 - Book of Common Prayer (REC2003)
 - 39 Articles of Religion
 - Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral
 - Declaration of Principles
 - Jerusalem Declaration

Reverent & liturgical worship with comprehensive churchmanship

- Historic Book of Common Prayer in Elizabethan or Contemporary Language as approved by the Reformed Episcopal Church
- Sacramental Worship with Biblical Preaching
- Customs reflective of varying cultures (African American, Anglo, Latin, etc)
- Comprehensive Churchmanship (low, high, etc)
- Music expressing the beauty and character of God, and the hymnody of the historic church – most especially as contained in the 1940 Hymnal and REC Book of Common Praise 2017

A biblical world & life view

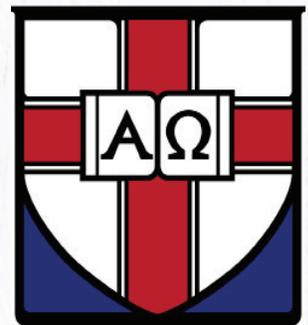
- Testing all things by Scripture
- Biblical & Traditional views on:
 - Marriage & Family
 - Gender & Sexuality
 - Sanctity of Human Life
 - Morality based on the 10 Commandments and teachings of Jesus

Being an always missional community

- Seeking to provide ways for unbelievers to 'belong' before they 'believe'
- Willing to care for the least, the last, the lost, and the lonely
- Committed to the support of both domestic and foreign mission
- Raising up and equipping Missionaries and Church planters

Discipleship & personal commitments of all members

- Ministry that equips laity to be active in all aspects of the work of the Church
- Ministry that develops future leadership both lay & clergy
- Establishing Christian schools and Christian education at all levels
- Providing Biblical and faithful seminaries
- Encourages the Tithe (10%) as the normative model of giving



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