

## SPCC an Invitation to Discover Life

### **Vision:**

The message of Jesus has been hi-jacked.

It's been narrowed down to a message about managing sin, a one-time decision, mansions in the sky, evacuating earth and escaping torment when you die.

Overall it's become about somewhere else, at some point in the future, with little emphasis on the here and now.

This message is of no interest to our lost, hurting and hopeless world.

Thankfully, this is not the message Jesus came proclaiming.

Jesus came proclaiming that life in his Father's Kingdom was now available to everyone everywhere right here, right now. (Matthew 4:17, Mark 1:15)

He said he came to bring life so that we may have it to the full. He said he was the life and those who first followed him called him the author of life and said that they had seen and touched "the life". (John 10:10, John 14:6, Acts 3:15, 1 John 1:2)

These first followers lived in this new life, in the power of His Spirit, devoting themselves to continual discovery about what it meant to live in the Kingdom of God while at the same time inviting everybody everywhere to join in on this new life now.

This then, is our vision. To be a church where;

**We invite everyone  
to discover life<sup>1</sup>  
in God's kingdom<sup>2</sup>.**

A church where everything we do and are connected to is always helping people to discover the life Jesus talked about and is always inviting others to join in.

<sup>1</sup> **Life:** *Peace, Love, Forgiveness, Hope, Healing, Joy, Freedom, Reconciliation, Purpose, Meaning, Restoration, Renewal, Rest, Beauty, Healthy Relationships, Grace*

<sup>2</sup> **God's Kingdom:** *"The range of God's effective will, where what God wants done is done." – Dallas Willard*

*"The redemptive reign of God." – Craig Van Gelder*

*To live in the Kingdom of God is to live under God's perfect and loving reign and rule, in the power of the Spirit, in every area of our lives. It is God's intended way of life, His intended way for us to relate to Him, to others, to creation and to ourselves. The accessibility and breaking in of God's Kingdom is the good news that Jesus came to bring.*

## **Spiritual Formation**

Life in God's kingdom is found as we actively pursue becoming more like Jesus. Not just learning more about Jesus, and not just doing things that Jesus did, but having as our first priority to become the kind of person who at our very core is like Jesus. Our primary goal then in helping people discover life in God's Kingdom will be to help everyone become more like Jesus. Our goal is transformed people who have discovered a new way of life, not just people who think or act differently.

## **Sunday Worship Experience**

People go where the life is. At some point, people stopped going to church because there was more life to be found somewhere else on a Sunday morning. We will be a church where coming to church on a Sunday morning is energizing, beautiful, inspiring and life-giving. We will create a welcoming environment to the stranger where it is obvious where to go and how to get connected. Where a new comer would come to watch even if they weren't ready to worship. Where the entire service helps people to experience the presence, power and life of the resurrected Jesus.

## **Children and Youth**

We will be a church that creates engaging environments where families are excited to return. We will partner with families for a greater combined influence and work toward the same end together, where children and youth are equipped to live an authentic faith in Jesus that connects them to a better story for their life, so that as they mature they are able to give testimony to their faith. We will be a resource and a refuge for parents and children.

## **Care**

Life in the Kingdom is life together. We will place caring for each other as a high priority and expect the majority of care to happen organically as everyone is cared for by those they are in relationship with. The care ministry then will focus on those who are connected to our church community who are not being cared for by family or friends.

## **Local and Global Missions**

Our focus will be to reach people, help them discover new life in God's Kingdom, help them to find transformation and power in the Spirit, and then encourage them to go out into the world, into their relationships, and into their jobs bringing new life and transforming the world around them. We will focus on becoming and creating servants, not programming serving into a schedule. In short, we won't be the church with the "soup kitchen". We will be the church that is creating the kinds of people who will go and work in the "soup kitchens" that already exist and who bring the life of Jesus with them. While we won't expend our finite resources creating social projects, we will focus on partnering with a small number of local and global organizations that have a Kingdom mindset (ex. Justice, Life transformation) and are creating lasting and sustainable change in people and communities. We will form long term relationships with these organizations and they will be the primary places that we highlight and encourage our people to serve in.

## **Marketing/Branding**

We believe God is already at work in the hearts and minds of people and is inviting everyone to discover life in His kingdom. In communicating this same message, we will not be afraid to develop a brand and think like advertisers. We will make use of every available creative and technological means to spread the invitation.

## **Connection**

We will be a church where we go over the top in order to make the new comer feel welcome and have systems in place to get them connected to our community. We will always have a next step to invite people to take (ex. one time event, small group, short term class, volunteer/leadership position).

## **6 Key Characteristics of Discovering Life in God's kingdom (Kingdom Life):**

In order to define what life in God's kingdom looks like both for our people and to think strategically about how we are inviting people to discover it we have defined life in God's kingdom as bearing six key characteristics that we will work to develop in our people.

### ***Learning the story of Jesus***

Learning the story of Jesus, or more specifically, learning the good news that the story of Jesus is the fulfillment of the story of Israel, is essential to understanding God's kingdom here and now and the future hope that we have. Therefore, someone who is discovering life in God's kingdom will be continually learning and reflecting on this story which is captured in the Bible. (Acts 2:42)

### ***Being with God***

Life in God's Kingdom is life with God in an ever deepening relationship. This means spending time alone with God in prayer and meditation, spending time in worship where we acknowledge God as creator and loving Father and ourselves as creation and beloved children, and by becoming aware of his presence in everyday life. (John 17:3)

### ***Becoming more like Jesus***

Life in God's kingdom is found as we actively pursue becoming more like Jesus. Discipleship often stops short at learning and doing and we want to stress that life in God's kingdom is about personal transformation. (Galatians 5:22-23)

### ***Living in Community***

Life in God's kingdom is life together with Jesus at the center. It is about sharing life's joys (celebration), sharing our sins (confession), sharing our possessions, sharing our burdens and caring for one another. (Acts 2:42-46)

### ***Loving Service***

Selfless acts of love are the natural outflow of someone who has discovered kingdom life and are an essential way that we exemplify and experience what this life is all about. Loving service may be demonstrated in acts of volunteerism but also include how we care for and serve our family, co-workers and neighbors in everyday life (John 13:34-35).

*\*\*While our church isn't interested in providing or organizing a multitude of volunteer opportunities, we will emphasize the importance of this characteristic through our teaching and small group accountability. We must always remember that the higher goal is creating people who are like Jesus (Matthew 23:23-28, 1 Samuel 16:7).*

### ***Inviting Everyone***

When you've discovered life in God's kingdom you can't help but invite others to find what you've found and to meet the king you've come to know. (The book of Acts)

## **Guiding Principles:**

The guiding principles act as a filter through which our teams make their decisions.

### **Simplicity**

Simplicity creates clarity, clarity creates unity and unity is powerful. Simplicity is also inviting and beautiful. For these reasons we will strive for simplicity in everything we do.

### **Excellence**

We will seek to use our gifts and resources to the best of our abilities, always measuring and evaluating what we do in a constant effort to improve.

### **Relational**

Life in God's Kingdom is all about being in right relationship with God, ourselves, one another and creation. We will uphold the principle of relationships both in our personal lives and by seeking to be in relationship with local and global organizations that align with our vision.

### **Healthy Rhythms**

Life in God's Kingdom has a proper balance between work and play, rest and activity, solitude and noise. In a culture where busyness and constant stimulation is ruining lives we will value a balanced and centered life where rest and the spiritual disciplines are emphasized.

### **Selfless**

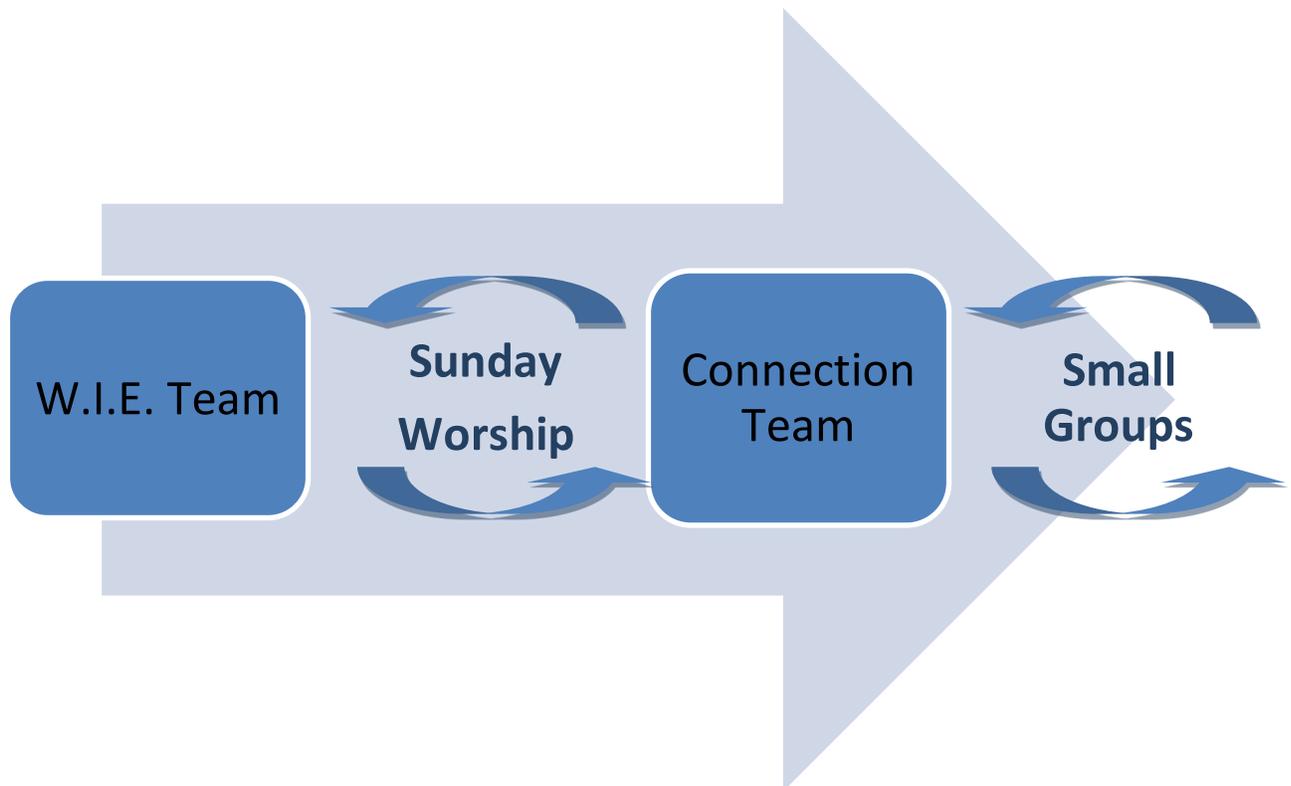
It is clear that Jesus went to great lengths to reach the lost, broken, hurting and in need. He broke tradition, social barriers and even humbled himself to become human and die as a criminal. With Jesus as our example we commit to the continual stretching of ourselves by holding reaching the lost as more important than maintaining tradition, pleasing ourselves or staying comfortable.

### **Relevant**

If coming into church feels like stepping back in time then we have reinforced the message prevalent in our culture that God and church are things of the past. We will seek to be culturally up to date in all that we do so that we don't place an unnecessary stumbling block in the way of people finding new life in God's Kingdom. While the message will never change, we will not be afraid to change our methods in order to reach our culture by embracing new ideas and technologies.

## Strategic Engine:

The primary ways we invite everyone to discover life in God's kingdom. Think of this as the engine of our church.



The main way that we will **invite** everyone to discover life in God's kingdom is through continual marketing and outreach through the W.I.E. team that brings people to our Sunday worship service. On a Sunday morning they will begin to **discover** a taste of what life in God's kingdom is like and will want to come back the next week. From there it is the Connection Team's main goal and biggest win to get people to join a small group.

**Vision Statement**

We invite everyone to discover life in God's kingdom.

**Key Characteristics of discovering life in God's Kingdom**

Learning, Knowing, Becoming, Sharing Life, Loving, Inviting

**Core Ministries**

*(Cover most of the key characteristics, include the majority of our people, create the essential engine needed to fulfill the vision)*

W.I.E. (*We invite Everyone*)  
Sunday Worship Experience  
Praise Patch and Unlocked  
Connection Team

**Support Ministries**

*(Involve a smaller amount of people and key characteristics)*

Care	Missions
Membership	Souled Out
GEMS	H2O
Fellowship	Adult S.F.

**Foundational Ministries/Committees**

*(To govern and support the church as an organization)*

Elder Board	Finance
Property	Admin
Nominating	Leadership Dev.
Personnel	

## **Core Ministries**

Core ministries are the ones we want to pour the most energy and resources into because we think they will help the most amount of people discover life in God's kingdom as defined by the six key characteristics. Ideally they facilitate all or at least most of the six key characteristics in some way. Our core ministries also work to create the main engine by which the rest of the church runs.

### ***Sunday Worship Experience***

The consistent gathering together as a large community provides the regular opportunity to teach (*learning*) how one can develop one or more of the six key characteristics of kingdom life. There is also a dynamic of worship in which we encounter God (*knowing*) and are transformed (*becoming*) by His grace. It is also a chance for some simple community moments (*sharing life*) and is a natural first place to *invite* someone new.

### ***Small Groups***

Small groups that meet regularly provide the opportunity for deeper *learning*, for prayer exercises together that deepen our relationship with God (*knowing*), for accountability about what spiritual disciplines we are practicing (*becoming*), for *sharing* life together, for *loving* one another and being held accountable for who we are loving and serving in other aspects of our life and is a great place to *invite* others to discover life in God's kingdom.

### ***Praise Patch/Unlocked***

These are core ministries because the Sunday worship experience and small group experience are not suitable for helping younger children discover life in God's kingdom. Also, without these programs operating on Sunday morning it would greatly affect the effectiveness of the Sunday Worship Experience for adults.

### ***W.I.E. (We Invite Everyone)***

Canadian culture is now post Christian, meaning we no longer live in a culture dominated by Christian morals and where the Christian story is known by all. Because of this, we feel it is essential to designate our resources and focus to unique ways of inviting people to discover life in the Kingdom of God. We can't just sit back and hope people will find us.

## **Support Ministries**

Support ministries help people discover life in God's kingdom or support our Core ministries but they reach a smaller amount of people and generally only contribute to building a couple of the key characteristics. We will strive to keep the number of support ministries to a minimum to keep the emphasis on our core ministries and to keep our organization as simple as possible.

## **Foundational Ministries/Committees**

Foundational Ministries and Committees are the necessary bodies to govern and support our church as an organization.