



St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Calgary AB

Our Strategy As A Missional Church

Our Current Reality

The Attractional Model of Church that served us so very well for many decades no longer works as our strategy. This is because our society has become secular and is no longer our partner in fostering and sustaining Christian faith in individuals. Additionally, the mechanism that did exist for passing on the Christian faith intergenerationally through families is broken. Consequently, the Church is in decline in Canada, jeopardizing the next generation of faith communities in our country.

Our Mission

“Woven into the neighbourhood, growing disciples like Jesus.” It captures a core directive of Jesus: “Go and make disciples of all peoples.” Pursuing this directive enables communities of faith to continue to exist, generation after generation, as co-workers with God and thereby be perpetual evidence for the existence of God.

Our Playing Field

The field we choose to play on are the Kingsland and Haysboro neighbourhoods. Here is what we know about people in these neighbourhoods:

- They are secular, comprised mostly of persons who know little about the Christian faith. Consequently, they have little or no motivation to inquire into Christianity or to check out a faith community like us.
- There are social needs in these neighbourhoods that are more prevalent than the Calgary average, such as the number of low-income families, the number of immigrants, a significant number of single parent families, and a higher percentage of youth that can be considered “at risk.” Additionally, there is a significant population of off-reserve indigenous persons. We also know that the sense of “community” in these neighbourhoods is not strong, and we believe residents can benefit from greater social ties to each other.

We choose to be on this playing field because of its limited and realistic scope for us, its proximity to the resource that is our facility, the needs of these neighbourhoods and our understanding that our congregants have compassion for persons with these kinds of needs.

Our Strategy

We will become woven into our neighbourhood by getting to know our neighbours and their needs, becoming partners with them to address those needs. By giving of ourselves in this way, voluntarily, for the sake of others, we will express the love of neighbour, demonstrate what the Christian faith is, and be evidence for the existence of God. It is our hope that this strategy will prompt some to become interested in our faith and begin their own journey to grow as Jesus' disciples alongside us.

The Outcome We Desire (Vision)

Our congregation's vision is "Growing. Life. Together. With God." In terms of our core mission, the outcomes we wish to see are:

- "Life in abundance." Jesus said this was one of the reasons for his coming and he fostered it in part by meeting people's needs. By pursuing our strategy, we desire people to have more abundant lives.
- a greater sense of community in these neighbourhoods, for we believe community strength is one means to a more abundant life.
- People discovering the Christian faith, becoming curious about it, and developing an interest in exploring it for themselves.

All three of these outcomes rely on growth.

Our Sense of the Required Criteria for Success

For this strategy to be successful, what must be true about the people in our neighbourhood?

- They will want what we offer. What we are doing must be relevant to them
- They must trust us
- They will have to be engaged with us
- They must be willing to partner with us to meet needs

For this strategy to be successful, what must be true about us?

- We are willing to accept the challenge
- We are committed, in for the long haul in this work
- We will offer what meets actual needs
- The focus of what we do must be specific enough that it is doable
- What we do must be relevant to us so we feel motivated to act
- We will need to be nimble and flexible
- We must have allies and partners
- Be willing to let go of old ideas

As we become more woven into the neighbourhood we watch to see if these criteria are true, and work to make them true. As we gain more experience, we can modify these criteria.