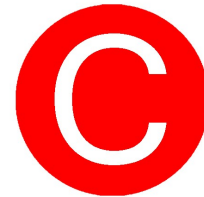


a **WORSHIPPING COMMUNITY** of
MISSIONAL THEOLOGIANS



Worshipping



Community



Missional



Theologians

Resources available online: www.christcommunitychurch.com

a **WORSHIPPING COMMUNITY** of
 **MISSIONAL THEOLOGIAN**S

educate, envision and engage



The Church

A worshipping community of missional theologians.

1 Peter 2:9-10

You are a chosen race,
a royal priesthood,
a holy nation,
a people for his own possession,
that you may proclaim
the excellencies of him
who called you out of darkness
into his marvelous light.

Once you were not a people,
but now you are God's people;
once you had not received mercy,
but now you have received mercy.

The church is the bride of Jesus; a holy nation;
the pillar of truth. The church is beautiful and
broken, but at its center is the gospel.

It is our hope that this six-week immersion
into what we consider to be the five main
functions of the local church will be a time of
renewal for us individually and corporately.

Content where not original is adapted from:
J.I. Packer's Concise Theology, John Stott's The Living Church.

How to Use This Booklet

You are holding one part of a larger, holistic approach to studying the church. In a given week over the next six, we will spend time studying individually, corporately on Sunday morning, and in a community group setting.

For each topic, please read the materials provided prior to the week's sermon, Sunday School and community group discussion.

Whether you are studying this in a community group or on your own, take some time to think through the provided questions and share your answers with someone. If you do not attend a community group yet, there are open groups available. Email Frank Matthews to join a group for these important weeks of study in the life of our church:

fmatthews@christcommunitychurch.com

The Church



Worshiping

Discussion Questions
Reflection: Worship
Current Practices



Community

Discussion Questions
Reflection: Fellowship
Current Practices



Theologians

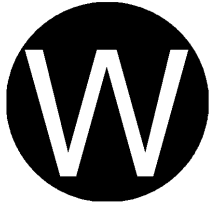
Discussion Questions
Reflection: Learning
Current Practices



Missional

Mercy Discussion Questions
Reflection: Mercy
Current Practices

Evangelism Discussion Questions
Reflection: Evangelism
Current Practices



Worship (n.)

Reverent honor and homage paid to God or a sacred personage, or to any object regarded as sacred.

Discussion Questions

Read the section on worship. Whether you are studying this in a community group or on your own, take some time to think through these questions. Share your answers with someone.

1. What are the components of Biblical worship?
2. How would you compare this explanation of worship with your own beliefs?
3. Is private worship a priority in your life? What are some ways that you could increase private worship?
4. Packer says that worship should be “exuberant, indeed ecstatic.” Read Revelation 19:1-8. Describe the worship happening in these verses.
5. What is the importance of corporate worship?
6. Based on this scripture (and others cited in this article), what should be the tone of our corporate worship?
7. Think about corporate worship at Christ Community Church. What are some things you can do to better prepare for corporate worship on Sunday morning.
8. How would you compare your personal experience with what we see in scripture? How is CCC doing in this area? What can we (both personally and as a church) do to improve?

WORSHIP Week 1: Aug 17-23

Worship in the Bible is the due response of rational creatures to the self-revelation of their Creator. It is an honoring and glorifying of God by gratefully offering back to him all the good gifts, and all the knowledge of his greatness and graciousness, that he has given. It involves praising him for what he is, thanking him for what he has done, desiring him to get himself more glory by further acts of mercy, judgment, and power, and trusting him with our concern for our own and others' future well-being. Moods of awestruck wonder and grateful celebration are all part of it: David danced with passionate zeal "before the LORD" when he brought up the ark to Jerusalem and sat in humble amazement "before the LORD" when he was promised a dynasty, and his worship evidently pleased God on both occasions (2 Sam. 6:14-16; 7:18). Learning from God is worship too: attention to his word of instruction honors him; inattention is an insult. Acceptable worship requires "clean hands and a pure heart" (Ps. 24:4) and a willingness to express one's devotion in works of service as well as in words of adoration.

The basis of worship is the covenant relationship whereby God has bound himself to those whom he has saved and claimed. This was true of Old Testament worship as it is now of Christian worship. The spirit of covenant worship, as the Old Testament models it, is a blend of awe and joy at the privilege of drawing near to the mighty Creator with radical self-humbling and honest confession of sin, folly, and need. Since God is holy and we humans are faulty, it must ever be so in this world. As worship will be central in the life of heaven (Rev. 4:8-11, 5:9-14; 7:9-17; 11:15-18; 15:2-4; 19:1-10), so it must be central in the life of the church on earth, and it should already be the main activity, both private and corporate, in each believer's life (Col. 3:17).

God does not prescribe for Christian worship in the detailed fashion of Old Testament times, but the New Testament shows clearly what the staple ingredients of corporate Christian worship are, namely, praise ("psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs," Eph. 5:19), prayer, and preaching, with regular administration of the Lord's Supper (Acts 20:7-11). Singing to God's praise was evidently a big thing in the apostolic

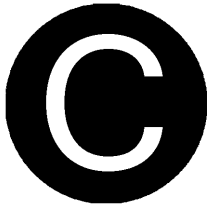
church, as it has been in all movements of spiritual power ever since: Paul and Barnabas, along with their praying (aloud), sang hymns in the prison in Philippi (Acts 16:25), and the New Testament contains a number of what appear to be hymn fragments (Eph. 5:14; Phil. 2:6-11; 1 Tim. 3:16; and others) while the "new songs" of Revelation are both numerous and exuberant, indeed ecstatic (Rev. 4:8, 11; 5:9-10, 12-13; 7:10, 12; 11:15, 17-18; 12:10-12; 15:3-4; 19:1-8; 21:3-4). Any local church anywhere that is spiritually alive will undoubtedly take its singing, praying, and preaching very seriously indeed, and be jealous for all three.

Current Practices at Christ Community Church

1. Each Sunday we meet for corporate worship.
2. Observe communion on the first Sunday of every month.
3. Community groups offer prayers and/or songs together.
4. Children are taught how to worship as a group during children's church.

What's next?

Goals for our church based on this project will be announced October 4.



Fellowship (n.)

1. Friendly relationship; companionship.
2. Community of interest, feeling, etc.
3. communion, as between members of the same church.

Discussion Questions

Read the section on fellowship. Whether you are studying this in a community group or on your own, take some time to think through these questions. Share your answers with someone.

1. What is fellowship? How do you like to fellowship?
2. After reading the verses in paragraph 1, what is the unifying factor for the people of the church?
3. In paragraph 2, the verses talk about us sharing life in a local church. Why does God want us to be in fellowship with other believers? How should Christian fellowship differ from fellowshiping with people who have not placed their faith in Christ?
4. Where have you benefitted from being a part of the church?
5. What keeps you from fellowshiping with other Christians? Is it something you value as part of what God has instructed us to do?
6. God has gifted each person! These gifts are ways we strengthen the church and fellow believers. What are your gifts? Have you found a place to use your gifts in the local church?
7. How has God strengthened you through the use of your gifts or another persons gifts in the body of Christ?
8. How is Christ Community Church doing in this area? What can we (both personally and as a church) do to improve?

FELLOWSHIP Week 2: Aug 24-30

The New Testament defines the church in terms of the fulfillment of Old Testament hopes and patterns through a relationship to all three Persons of the Godhead, brought about by the mediatorial ministry of Jesus Christ. The church is seen as the family and flock of God (Eph. 2:18; 3:15; 4:6; John 10:16; 1 Pet. 5:2-4), his Israel (Gal. 6:16); the body and bride of Christ (Eph. 1:22-23; 5:25-28; Rev. 19:7; 21:2, 9-27); and the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 3:16; cf. Eph. 2:19-22). Those in the church are called the “elect” (chosen), the “saints” (consecrated ones, set apart for God), and the “brothers” (adopted children of God). The New Testament assumes that all Christians will share in the life of a local church, meeting with it for worship (Heb. 10:25), accepting its nurture and discipline (Matt. 18:15-20; Gal. 6:1), and sharing in its work of witness. Christians disobey God and impoverish themselves by refusing to join with other believers when there is a local congregation that they can belong to.

The New Testament depicts local churches in which some Christians hold formal and official ministerial offices (elder-overseers and deacons, Phil. 1:1), while all fulfill informal serving roles. Every-member ministry in the body of Christ is the New Testament ideal. It is clear that officers who oversee should not restrict the informal ministries but rather should facilitate them (Eph. 4:11-13), just as it is clear that those who minister informally should not be defiant or disruptive but should allow the overseers to direct their ministries in ways that are orderly and edifying (i.e., strengthening and upbuilding, 1 Cor. 14:3-5, 12, 26, 40; Heb. 13:17). The body of Christ grows to maturity in faith and love “as each part does its work” (Eph. 4:16) and fulfills its grace-given form of service (Eph. 4:7, 12). The word *gift* (literally “donation”) appears in connection with spiritual service only in Ephesians 4:7-8. Paul explains the phrase *he... gave gifts to men* as referring to the ascended Christ giving his church persons called to and equipped for the ministries of apostle, prophet, evangelist, and pastor-teacher. Also, through the enabling ministry of these functionaries, Christ is bestowing a ministry role of one sort or another on every Christian. Elsewhere (Rom. 12:4-8; 1 Cor. 12-14) Paul calls these divinely given powers to serve *charismata* (gifts which are specific manifestations of *charis* or grace, God’s active and creative love, 1 Cor. 12:4), and also *pneumatika* (spiritual gifts as specific demonstrations of

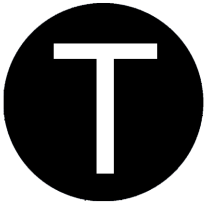
the energy of the Holy Spirit, God’s *pneuma*, 1 Cor. 12:1). Amid many obscurities and debated questions regarding New Testament *charismata*, three certainties stand out. First, a spiritual gift is an ability in some way to express, celebrate, display, and so communicate Christ. We are told that gifts, rightly used, build up Christians and churches. But only knowledge of God in Christ builds up, so each *charisma* must be an ability from Christ to show and share Christ in an upbuilding way. Second, gifts are of two types. There are gifts of speech and of loving, practical helpfulness. In Romans 12:6-8, Paul’s list of gifts alternates between the categories: items one, three, and four (prophecy, teaching, and exhorting) are gifts of speech; items two, five, six, and seven (serving, giving, leading, and showing mercy) are gifts of helpfulness. The alternation implies that no thought of superiority of one gift over another may enter in. However much gifts differ as forms of human activity, all are of equal dignity, and the only question is whether one properly uses the gift one has (1 Pet. 4:10-11). Third, no Christian is giftless (1 Cor. 12:7; Eph. 4:7), and it is everyone’s responsibility to find, develop, and fully use whatever capacities for service God has given.

Current Practices at Christ Community Church

1. Community groups meet weekly
2. Various men’s, women’s and crossroads events happening year round.

What’s next?

Goals for our church based on this project will be announced October 4.



Learning (n.)

1. Knowledge acquired by systematic study in any field of scholarly application.
2. The act or process of acquiring knowledge or skill.
3. The modification of behavior through practice, training, or experience.

Discussion Questions

Read the section on learning. Whether you are studying this in a community group or on your own, take some time to think through these questions. Share your answers with someone.

1. What is your attitude toward learning God's Word?
2. What avenues have helped you most in learning it?
3. Why does God encourage us to be devoted to learning His Word? What does it teach us about Him? Us?
4. In Psalm 119, what does God give us through His word? What does it guard us from? What is to be our attitude toward it?
5. The Psalmist talks about knowing, seeking, following, delighting etc... If you look at your life where are you excited that God has used His word to instruct or guard you? How would you desire Him to teach you more of it?
6. Read Deut 6:4-6; 20-25 Teaching God's Word and character to the next generation is extremely important. What are God's instructions on how to do this? While personal and family devotions are a means to teaching our children, what are the strengths in teaching them "along the way?" Note the use of scripture in 2 Tim. 3:16 How does it relate to this idea of teaching our children?
7. Earlier we read that new believers were given the gift of the Holy Spirit and they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching. Read the verses above again and talk about what is the Holy Spirit's role in learning about God and the life He calls us to.
8. How would you compare your personal experience with what we see in scripture? How is CCC doing in this area? What can we (both personally and as a church) do to improve?

LEARNING Week 3: Aug 31-Sept 6

In Acts 2:42, the outworking of the Day of Pentecost (when the Holy Spirit of God came to dwell) resulted in the life of the early church. One might say that the Holy Spirit opened a school in Jerusalem on that day. The schoolteachers were the apostles, whom Jesus had appointed and trained, and there were three thousand pupils in the kindergarten! It was a very remarkable situation.

We note that those new Spirit-filled converts were not enjoying a mystical experience which led them to neglect their intellect, despise theology or stop thinking. On the contrary, “they met constantly to hear the apostles teach.” So I do not hesitate to say that anti-intellectualism and the fullness of the Holy Spirit are mutually incompatible. For who is the Holy Spirit? He is “the Spirit of Truth”; that was one of Jesus’ favorite descriptions of him. It stands to reason, therefore, that wherever the Spirit of truth is at work, truth matters.

Notice something else about those first Christian believers. They did not suppose that, because they had received the Holy Spirit, He was the only teacher they needed, and they could dispense with human teachers. Not at all. They acknowledged that Jesus had called the apostles to be the teachers of the church. So they sat at the apostles’ feet. They were eager to learn all they could.

What then is the application of all of this to us? How is it possible for us to submit ourselves and our churches to the teaching authority of the apostles? The answer is obvious. The teaching of the apostles is found in the New Testament. It is here that their teaching has been bequeathed to us in its definitive form.

So we affirm that a living church is a learning church, a church submissive to the teaching authority of the apostles. Its pastors expound Scripture from the pulpit, and its teachers in classrooms and community groups. Its parents teach their children out of the Scriptures at home, and its members read and reflect on the Scriptures every day in order to grow in Christian discipleship. The Spirit of God leads the people of God to honor the word of God. We dream of a church whose people

love the word of God, and adorn it with an obedient and Christ-like life, which is preserved from all unbiblical emphases, whose whole life manifests the health and beauty of biblical balance.

Further reading:

Scripture references that speak to knowing God’s Word:

Ps 119, 2; Tim 3:16, 4:2-5, Col 3:16, Heb. 5:11-14, Deut6:4-6; 20-25

Role of the Holy Spirit in Learning:

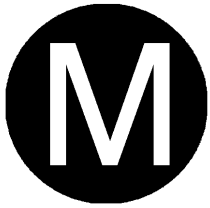
John 16:4-15, 1 Cor. 2:10-13, Gal. 5:16-24, Rom 8:16

Current Practices at Christ Community Church

1. Men’s and Women’s Bible studies
2. Community Groups
3. Adult and Children’s Education on Sunday Morning
4. Preaching on Sunday mornings
5. Resources online and at the office
6. Discipleship groups
7. Youth ministry
8. Providing family study resources at Easter, Christmas and times when we are having congregational studies.

What’s next?

Goals for our church based on this project will be announced October 4.



Mercy (n.)

1. The disposition to be compassionate or forbearing.
2. An act of kindness, compassion, or favor.

Discussion Questions

Read the section on mercy. Whether you are studying this in a community group or on your own, take some time to think through these questions. Share your answers with someone.

1. What are some components of Biblical mercy?
2. How would you compare this explanation of mercy with your own beliefs and practice?
3. Is showing mercy a priority in your life? What are some ways that you currently show mercy?
4. What are some obstacles to showing biblical mercy?
5. Packer says that “all Christians are called to practice deeds of mercy and compassion.” Read Matthew 5:16 and 1 Peter 2:11-12. What are ways that you/your family/your community group could prioritize this portion of Christ’s agenda?
6. In recent history, churches have reduced the gospel by either preaching good words OR practicing good deeds. Where does CCC need to be stretched? Where do you need to be stretched?
7. How would you compare your personal experience with what we see in scripture? How is CCC doing in this area? What can we (both personally and as a church) do to improve? What are some ways we can show mercy as a church in Gainesville?

MERCY Week 4: Sept 7-Sept 13

Mission is from the Latin *missio*, which means “sending.” The words Jesus spoke to his first disciples in their representative capacity, “As the Father has sent me, I am sending you” (John 20:21; cf. 17:18), still apply. The universal church, and therefore every local congregation and every Christian in it, is sent into the world to fulfill a definite, defined task. Jesus, the church’s Lord, has issued marching orders. Individually and corporately, all God’s people are now in the world on the king’s business.

All Christians, and therefore every congregation of the church on earth, are called to practice deeds of mercy and compassion, a thoroughgoing neighbor-love that responds unstintingly to all forms of human need as they present themselves (Luke 10:25-27; Rom. 12:20-21). Compassion was the inward aspect of the neighbor-love that led Jesus to heal the sick, feed the hungry, and teach the ignorant (Matt. 9:36; 15:32; 20:34; Mark 1:41; Luke 7:13), and those who are new creatures in Christ must be similarly compassionate. Thereby they keep the second great commandment and also give credibility to their proclamation of a Savior who makes sinners into lovers of God and of their fellow human beings. If the exponents of this message do not display its power in their own lives, credibility is destroyed. If they do, credibility is enhanced. This was Jesus’ point when he envisaged the sight of the good works of his witnesses leading people to glorify the Father (Matt. 5:16; cf. 1 Pet. 2:11-12). Good works should be visible to back up good words.

Christians are sent into the world by their Lord (John 17:18) to witness to it about God’s Christ and his kingdom (Matt. 24:14; cf. Rom. 10:18; Col. 1:6, 23) and to serve its needs. But they are to do so without falling victim to its materialism (Matt. 6:19-24, 32), its unconcern about God and the next life (Luke 12:13-21), and its prideful pursuit of pleasure, profit, and position to the exclusion of everything else (1 John 2:15-17). The world is at present Satan’s kingdom (John 14:30; 2 Cor. 4:4; 1 John 5:19; cf. Luke 4:5-7), and the outlook and mind-set of human societies reflect more of the pride seen in Satan than the humility seen in Christ.

Christians, like Christ, are to empathize with people’s anxieties and needs in order to serve them and communicate with them effectively. They are to do so, however, on a basis of motivational detachment from

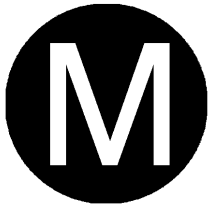
this world, through which they are momentarily passing as they travel home to God and in which their single-minded purpose must be to please God (Col. 1:9-12; 1 Pet. 2:11). Monastic withdrawal from this world is not sanctioned (John 17:15), but neither is worldliness (i.e., any internalizing of the earthbound self-absorption of the people of this world: Titus 2:12). Jesus encourages his disciples to match worldly persons’ ingenuity in using their resources to further their goals, but he specifies that their proper goals have to do not with earthly security but with heavenly glory (Luke 16:9).

Current Practices at Christ Community Church

1. Serving Gainesville (days we met at Wal-Mart parking lot)
2. Deacons’ fund: This is a part of our church budget that is managed by the deacons. People can request help through any of the deacons.
3. Giving to House of Hope (men in transition from incarceration); Arbor House (expecting mothers with housing needs); Gainesville Community Ministries.
4. Deacons and others have “cases” they are helping.
5. Backpack prep for children going back to school.
6. Filling and sending gift shoe boxes at Christmas through Samaritan’s Purse.
7. Mission trips to Palmer Children’s Home and Isaiah 55 ministries
8. Providing meals to families in times of crisis and need.
9. Providing personal counseling through Rich Greete’s trips to our offices.

What’s next?

Goals for our church based on this project will be announced October 4.



Evangelism (n.)

1. The preaching or promulgation of the gospel; the work of an evangelist.
2. Missionary zeal, purpose, or activity.

Discussion Questions

Read the section on evangelism. Whether you are studying this in a community group or on your own, take some time to think through these questions. Share your answers with someone.

1. *“Jesus is to be proclaimed everywhere as God incarnate, Lord, and Savior; and God’s authoritative invitation to find life through turning to Christ in repentance and faith.”* Where is this currently a priority in your life? What might it look like if your faith in and allegiance to this portion of Christ’s agenda were heightened?
2. Read Romans 10. What is the method God has chosen to extend his message?
3. Who are the people without Christ’s hope that God has placed in your path?
4. What are the options available to you to bring them in contact with our Savior-King?
5. Recent research shows that 82% of those without a church home would attend church if asked, but only 2% of church-attendees invite friends each year. How have the people you’ve invited to church responded? Who would it be natural for you to invite this month?
6. How would you compare your personal experience in evangelism with what we see in scripture? How is CCC doing in this area? What can you we (both personally and as a church) do to improve ?

EVANGELISM Weeks 5 & 6: Sept 14-27

The task of the church is to make the invisible kingdom visible through faithful Christian living and witness-bearing. The gospel of Christ is still the gospel of the kingdom (Matt. 4:23; 24:14; Acts 20:25; 28:23, 31), the good news of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit through entering a disciple's relationship to the living Lord (Rom. 14:17). The church must make its message credible by manifesting the reality of kingdom life. The coming of the kingdom meant a new stage in God's redemptive-historical program. The Messiah arrived, redeemed, and withdrew to his throne with a promise that he would come again. All that was typical, temporary, and imperfect in the God-given arrangements for Israel's communion with himself became a thing of the past. God's Israel, Abraham's seed, was redefined as the company of believers in Jesus (Gal. 3:16, 26-29). The Spirit was poured out, and a new way of life, namely life in Christ and with Christ, became a reality of this world. Thus the new internationalism of global church fellowship and global evangelism was born (Eph. 2:11-18; 3:6, 14-15; Rev. 5:9-10; 7:9; Matt. 28:19-20; Col. 1:28-29).

According to the apostle Peter, the church is both a royal priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices to God (which is worship) and a holy nation to spread abroad God's praises (which is witness) (1 Peter 2:9-10). Moreover, these responsibilities of the universal church devolve on each local church. Every Christian congregation is called by God to be a worshiping, witnessing community. Indeed, each of these two duties necessarily involves the other. If we truly worship God, acknowledging and adoring His infinite worth, we find ourselves impelled to make him known to others, in order that they may worship him too. Thus worship leads to witness in its turn to worship, in a perpetual circle.

The Thessalonians set a fine example of local church evangelism. Near the beginning of his first letter to them Paul points out this remarkable sequence: "Our gospel came to you...You welcomed the message... The Lord's message rang out from you." (1 Thess. 1:5-6,8). In this way the local church becomes like a sounding board which reflects and amplifies the vibrations it receives, or like a radio station which first accepts and

then transmits a message. Every church that has heard the gospel must pass it on. This is still God's principal method of evangelism.

Current Practices at Christ Community Church

1. July-August Adult Education class on evangelism.
2. Running the Christianity Explored course during the Spring. (Another class will run in October!)
3. "Knowing God" section of our website
4. Teaching our people to recognize their "spheres of relationships" in the Next Step class.
5. By making every aspect of our church's life together hospitable.
6. By encouraging people to invite people to church, events etc from their spheres of influence.
7. By praying for people.
8. Sending out individuals and teams to help announce God's gospel (recent trips include: Ireland, Mexico, and Mississippi)

What's next?

Goals for CCC based on this project will be announced October 4.

Appendix

From *The Living Church* by John Stott

“I Have a Dream of a Living Church” (November 24, 1997)

I have a dream of a church which is a biblical church...

which is loyal in every particular to the revelation of God in Scripture, whose pastors expound Scripture with integrity and relevance, and so seek to present every member mature in Christ, whose people love the Word of God and adorn it with an obedient and Christ-like life, which is preserved from all unbiblical emphases, whose whole life manifests the health and beauty of biblical balance. I have a dream of a biblical church.

I have a dream of a church which is a worshipping church...

whose people come together to meet God and worship him, who know God is always in their midst and who bow down before him in great humility, who regularly frequent the table of the Lord Jesus, to celebrate His mighty act of redemption on the cross, who enrich the worship with their musical skills, who believe in prayer and lay hold of God in prayer, whose worship is expressed not in Sunday service and prayer gatherings only but also in their homes, their weekly work and the common things of life. I have a dream of a worshipping church.

I have a dream of a church which is a caring church...

Whose congregation is drawn from many races, nations, ages and social backgrounds and exhibits the unity and diversity of the family of God, whose fellowship is warm and welcoming, and never marred by anger selfishness, jealousy or pride, whose members love one another with a pure heart fervently, forbearing one another's burdens, which offers friendship to the lonely, support to the weak, and rejected by society, whose love spills over to the world outside, attractive, infectious, irresistible, the love of God himself. I have a dream of a caring church.

I have a dream of a church which is a serving church...

Which has seen Christ as the Servant and has heard his call to be a servant too, which is delivered from self-interest, turned inside out, and giving itself selflessly to the service of others, whose members obey Christ's command to live in the world, to permeate secular society, to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world, whose people share the good news of Jesus simply, naturally and enthusiastically with their friends, which diligently serves its own parish, residents and workers, family and single people, nationals and immigrants, old folk and little children which is alert to the changing needs of society, sensitive and flexible enough to keep adapting its program to serve more usefully, which has a global vision and is constantly challenging its young people to give their lives in service, and constantly sending its people out to serve. I have a dream of a serving church.

I have a dream of a church which is an expectant church...

whose members can never settle down in material affluence or comfort, because they remember that they are strangers and pilgrims on earth, which is all the more faithful and active because it is waiting and looking for it Lord to return, which keeps the flame of the Christian hope burning brightly in a dark, despairing world, which on the day of Christ will not shirk from him in shame, but rise up joyfully to greet him. I have a dream of an expectant church.

Such is my dream of a living church. May all of us share this dream, and under God may the dream come true!

1 Peter 2:9-10

You are a chosen race,
a royal priesthood,
a holy nation,
a people for his own possession,
that you may proclaim
the excellencies of him
who called you out of darkness
into his marvelous light.

Once you were not a people,
but now you are God's people;
once you had not received mercy,
but now you have received mercy.

