

Christ Church Global Outreach Strategy

Why do we have a Global Outreach Strategy?

Why would Christ Church serve globally beyond her local community? It would be imprudent at best and compassionless at worst for citizens of the wealthiest nation in recorded human history to not be oriented globally. Technology has ushered in an age of globalization and we are now forever economically, ecologically, and culturally connected to most everyone—we are global citizens.

And the church should play a significant role in helping American citizens go global. Though the church has made mistakes along the way and asks forgiveness for much, still, she is vital to the flourishing of our bigger, broader, global community. Matthew Paris, an avowed atheist, observes this integrality in an article he wrote for the London Times entitled, “As an atheist, I truly believe Africa needs God.” There, he writes:

Traveling in Malawi [the author's boyhood home before he moved to London] refreshed another belief, too: one I've been trying to banish all my life, but an observation I've been unable to avoid since my African childhood. It confounds my ideological beliefs, stubbornly refuses to fit my world view, and has embarrassed my growing belief that there is no God. Now a confirmed atheist, I've become convinced of the enormous contribution that Christian evangelism makes in Africa: sharply distinct from the work of secular NGOs, government projects and international aid efforts. These alone will not do. Education and training alone will not do. In Africa Christianity changes people's hearts. It brings a spiritual transformation. The rebirth is real. The change is good. I used to avoid this truth by applauding—as you can—the practical work of mission churches in Africa. It's a pity, I would say, that salvation is part of the package, but Christians black and white, working in Africa, do heal the sick, do teach people to read and write; and only the severest kind of secularist could see a mission hospital or school and say the world would be better without it. I would allow that if faith was needed to motivate missionaries to help, then, fine: but what counted was the help, not the faith. But this doesn't fit the facts. Faith does more than support the missionary; it is also transferred to his flock. This is the effect that matters so immensely, and which I cannot help observing.

-Matthew Paris, The London Times, December 27, 2008.

It could be argued that no other organization in human history has mobilized resources and empowered workers and volunteers to serve the world quite like the church has. People have asked and will continue to ask, “Well, where was your God when (insert any particular catastrophe or calamity) happened?” Poignantly, we humbly should answer, “God is where his church is, and the church is bandaging wounds, serving the poor, educating the under served, and feeding the hungry in hot spots and pressure points throughout our globe.”

What is more, beyond a practical rationale for the church's engagement, Christians are implored by Jesus to be global in their mission. Christians believe the Bible to be God's word penned through human agency—a text that reveals his will (dream or hope) for the world. In these Scriptures, we hear the “famous last words” of Jesus, a statement now commonly referred to as the Great Commission:

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” —Matthew 28:18-20

We go into the world making followers of Christ, baptizing and teaching them, and we go with God's blessing, his very presence through the Holy Spirit. But what does this actually look like? How do we go? Or better stated: How is the church sent into the world?

How is Christ Church sent into the world?

Word and Deed

In the Scriptures, we learn how Christ was sent into the world. Luke, one of the four Gospel writers, tells us that Jesus was a “...prophet, powerful in word and deed” (Luke 24:19). Subsequently, toward the end of the

Gospel of John, Jesus says, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, I am now sending you" (John 20:21). So, just as Jesus was sent into the world via a ministry of Word and Deed, so too is the church sent into the world bearing the ministry of both word and deed.

At Christ Church, two of our six mission values are story-telling and peace-making. Story-telling represents our ministry of word. Peace-making represents our ministry of deed. In word, we tell the story of the Gospel—the Good News that Jesus came to bring forgiveness and redemption through his crucifixion and the hope of restoration through his resurrection. Through deed, we demonstrate this Good News as we dispense mercy, work for justice, and fight for peace.

The ministry of word and deed marked Jesus' life from the very beginning. He initiated his public ministry one Sabbath Day by picking up the scroll of Isaiah and reading these words: "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor" (see Isaiah 61). Then, according to Luke, "He rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened upon him. He began by saying to them, 'Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing'" (Luke 4:18-21).

In its essence, proclamation through word is the explanation of the deeds of the Gospel. We love, serve, heal, and restore, and then we explain our actions to a watching world. For 2000 years, Christians have grounded their lives in these words (story-telling) and deeds (peace-making) of Jesus.

Boldness and Humility

After the crucifixion and resurrection, the followers of Jesus faced a dilemma: It seemed that Jesus would be leaving. What were they to do? Over 500 gathered on a hillside as he departed. Before he left, Jesus spoke the last words of his public ministry: "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). Bewildered and afraid, Jesus' followers remained on the hillside searching for their risen (yet now departed) Lord. In the confusion, with Jesus no longer in view, two angels appeared and spoke to those who were staring intently upwards, "Why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11).

If the church learns her appropriate gestures of word (story-telling) and deed (peace-making) by watching the life of Jesus, then hear, in these last words, she learns her appropriate posture. The church was to stop craning its neck towards "heaven," content to receive the blessings of God on its own behalf. Rather, it was to be the blessing of God to the world, and to do so in both the bold power (*dynamis* in Greek, from which we get the word, dynamite) of the Holy Spirit and in the humility that marks the role of a witness (*martyrus* in Greek, from which we get the word, martyr). Thus, in our mission, our posture is one of both the humility of Jesus' crucifixion and the power of his Resurrection.

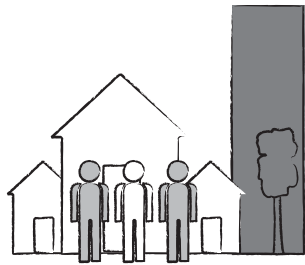
Hear the words of Paul, the first missionary, to the early church at Colossae. Hear in these words both the humility of the Crucifixion and power of the Resurrection: "Now I rejoice in what I am suffering for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church. I have become its servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness—the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the Lord's people. To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:24-27).

Putting it all Together

The church is essential to global flourishing. Christians go into the world because we are commanded by Christ to do so. And we go into the world just as Jesus came into the world. Jesus came telling the story (in Word); so too do we go telling the story (in Word). Jesus came making peace (through Deed); so too do we make peace (through Deed). And, our posture is one of both boldness and humility, because we are empowered (*dynamis*) by the Holy Spirit and commissioned as witnesses (*martyrus*), bearing the message of our Savior's crucifixion (and with it the promise of redemption) and resurrection (and with it the hope of restoration).

What do we do?

We partner with (1) members of Christ Church that are engaged in strategic global initiatives, (2) new church developments and indigenous churches in global cities and (3) university ministries in global cities.



Members of Christ Church



New and Indigenous Churches



University Ministries

Why members of Christ Church that are engaged in strategic global initiatives?

We trust that many from our congregation will go, and we are privileged to commission them to works of story telling and peace making. Additionally, many of our people will continue to live locally, while engaged in global initiatives. We partner with members of Christ Church that are commissioned to global posts and with those engaged locally in strategic global initiatives. At Christ Church, membership is very important to us because we view it as the local expression of one's baptized connection to the broader body of Christ. Thus, only members are considered for partnership. It is considered on a case-by-case basis whether or not a global initiative is determined to be strategic. (Please read both our Application and Advocacy forms.)

Why Global Cities?

2008 marked the first year in the history of human civilization that more than 50% of all people live in cities. The migration to the city will continue. Within 50 years, 70% of the world's population will live in cities. Global cities (metropolitan regions larger than 5 million people) are shaping this new reality.

God began history in a Garden (Genesis 1,2), but is ending it in a city (Revelations 21). The greatest missionary in history, Paul, had a simple, two-fold strategy for reaching out to a new area. First, he went into the largest city of the region (cf. Acts 16:9, 12), and then he planted churches in it (cf. Titus 1:5 - "appoint elders in every town"). Once Paul had done that, he could say that he had "fully preached" the gospel in a region and that he had "no more work" to do there (cf. Romans 15:19, 23). He knew everything that needed to happen for the culture to thrive and the Gospel to take root would soon follow.

Cities provide shelter for the weak and different, they are cultural development centers, and they are places of spiritual searching. Thus, cities are full of refugees needing shelter, pioneers creating culture, and pilgrims searching for truth. We work with partners in global cities to provide shelter for the refugee, to create culture alongside the pioneer, and to offer truth to the pilgrim.

Why Indigenous Church Developments and New Church Developments?

Churches are crucial to their local communities. *SimCity* was a game originally designed in 1989 on the premise that the economic strength of a city is contingent upon balancing the demands of citizen's residential, commercial, and industrial interests, as well as providing good access to basic civil services. Schools, police stations, water towers, and hydro lines all need to be built, and land needs to be zoned. All of this is for the purpose of making sure the city remains economically vibrant, and thus, healthy. In its original form, *SimCity Classic* had no church component. Then, in *SimCity 2000*, a nondescript church was included amongst the residential set, only to be removed when *SimCity 3000* made its debut. The *SimCity* production

team now lets players design their own buildings for in-game use. There are a handful of virtual churches available, but the chief problem is that they don't fit into any of SimCity's predetermined categories—they are deemed either "residential" or "other," and they serve little purpose in the grand scheme of things.

As one exits virtual reality and enters the "real world," she discovers the same dilemma: Do churches, or any established religious communities for that matter, have a role to play in an actual human city? The same shortsighted urban planning language can be seen in current economic development and urban renewal trends. The language of civil and business leadership fails to express adequately the important functions served by church communities. At best, churches are considered "limited social service providers." Yet, this description is painfully inadequate and incomplete.

Malcolm Gladwell, in an article in *The New Yorker* entitled "The Cellular Church," (September 2005) argues for the necessity of the church in modern society. He mentions a study performed by Ram Cnaan, a professor of social work at the University of Pennsylvania, in which "...he estimated the replacement value of the charitable work done by the average American church—that is, the amount of money it would take to equal the time, money, and resources donated to the community by a typical congregation—and found that it came to about a hundred and forty thousand dollars a year. In the city of Philadelphia, for example, that works out to an annual total of two hundred and fifty million dollars' worth of community 'good'; on a national scale, the contribution of religious groups to the public welfare is, as Cnaan puts it, 'staggering.' In the past twenty years, as the enthusiasm for public supported welfare has waned, churches have quietly and steadily stepped in to fill the gaps."

Because we see the church as the usual and most sustainable means through which God builds his kingdom, and because we see the most enduring and successful works to be indigenous church works (as compared to cross-cultural enterprises), thus we seek to partner globally with these thriving indigenous churches and their new church developments in global cities.

Why University Ministries?

University students are our future. At the university one can watch culture being created. Here at Berkeley, we watch students that are brilliantly and beautifully diverse become culture makers and world changers. We seek to celebrate this reality at other strategic universities in global cities throughout our world, partnering with ministries committed to the Gospel tasks of Word and Deed.

How do we do it?

Through prayer, giving, sending, and receiving. We (1) Pray for our partners, (2) Give to our partners, (3) Send our people abroad in short-term trips and to long-term posts, and (4) Receive our partners for seminars and conferences.

Prayer

We are committed to praying for (1) the global church, (2) justice and mercy for the marginalized and oppressed and (3) the needs of our partners on a weekly basis. Currently, every Tuesday morning at Christ Church on Cedar Street, we pray through a monthly prayer guide.

We plan to establish a weekly prayer group in Rockridge, and a Sunday morning prayer group at the Cedar street location.

Once a month, we will also have the congregation pray for the needs of a specific partner during the service.

During our Christ Church Kids classes, the teachers will have the opportunity to have the children pray for one of our partners.

We also envision a crisis response team, that will be organize prayer times as a response to natural or man-made disasters that occur in the world.

Giving

Financial Support for each partner is determined by the Global Outreach Advisory Team and approved by the Christ Church Servant Leader Council.

Sending

It is our hope to take our first short-term mission trip in 2011.

Receiving

It is our hope to host our first Mission Conference in 2012.