

All Souls Missoula

Vision Luncheon

Sunday, March 7, 2010

<http://allsoulsmissoula.org>

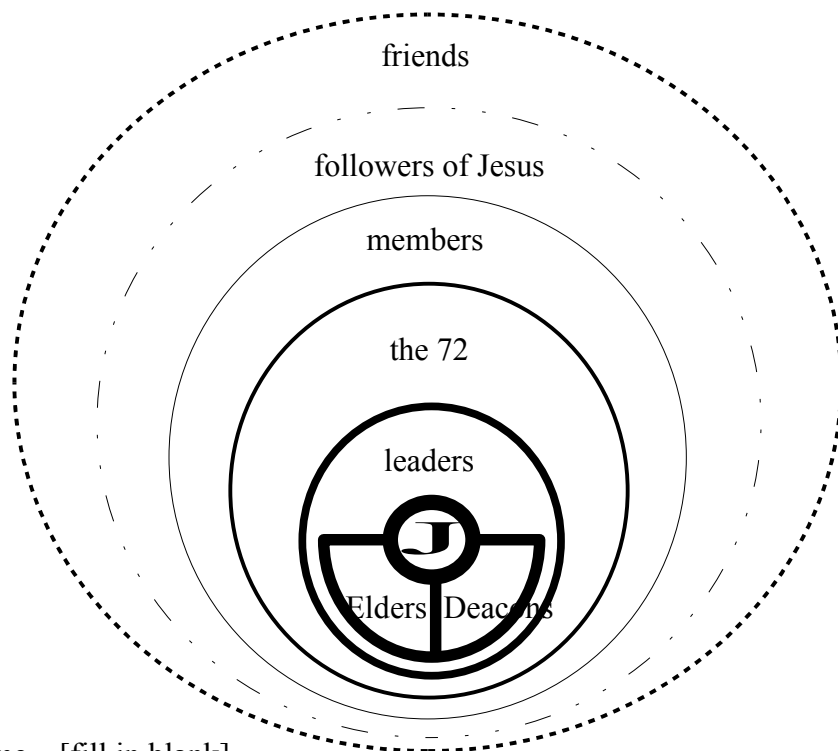
"A community of faith, in Jesus, where you don't have to share any of our convictions in order to be our friends."

"Working to renew the city socially, culturally, & spiritually."

1. How do we see the church?

Here at All Souls, we see the local church as a diverse community of friends who are at various stages of conviction, commitment and maturity. The deeper you desire to move, the more that is required.

All Souls Missoula



So how do I become... [fill in blank]

- a friend – we're committed to being friends with all sorts of people, no strings or stipulations. All you really need to do to be our friend is decide you want to be. That's it!
- a follower of Jesus – becoming a follower of Christ is both easy and hard. It's easy because Christ is the one who does all of the work – our part is simply to acknowledge that we're broken (sinners) and to call on him to rescue us (believe). Faith looks on Jesus as messiah, not mere example. So it's easy, because we trust in *his* performance, not our own. But it's also hard, since Jesus insists that all who come to him set aside their own interests and follow him – not to *earn* his favor, but because we've *already got it*. And there's no limit to what he might ask of us.
- a member – membership requires faith in Christ, and baptism if necessary (young children and infants may be baptized if they are in the care of a believing parent; older children should make a profession of faith before being baptized). You do NOT need to embrace all the ins and outs of the PCA to be a member at All Souls; you DO need to embrace classic Christianity, as summarized in the Apostles' and Nicene creeds).¹
- one of the 72 – if you are a member (or pursuing membership), simply contact one of the leaders and say “I'm interested in finding a way to serve. Will you help me?” (Oh yes... :-)
- a leader – become one of the 72, and as we figure out where you're gifted we'll begin to look for ways to help you lead and train others.

¹ See http://www.reformed.org/documents/apostles_creed.html and <http://www.reformed.org/documents/nicene.html>.

2. On BEING the church...

Fundamentally, we believe the church is more than just an organization that sits there and exists. We think of it as an *organism* that's going somewhere – we're on a mission to BE the church and to LOVE the city...

- overall we're doing fairly well at *being* the church (diversity, one-anothering)
- we have to continue to grow – not just numerically, but in *depth* (survival, who God is)
- so more of the same –
 - lots of entry points – parties, explorers groups, kettlehouse, worship
- a sharper focus – doing a few things *well*, rather than just doing lots of things
 - worship –
 - we need more involvement (leading, participation) – finding / utilizing your gifts
 - we need to see more ownership (helping out) – not b/c of guilt or duty, but b/c you see this as YOUR church and you are excited about what GOD is doing here
 - strategy for when we hit 100 – replicate rather than relocate
 - single biggest thing you can do: START PRAYING that God would GROW US
 - second biggest thing you can do: be there regularly
 - community groups –
 - we currently have 3 groups (Tues, Wed, Thurs) – needs to grow to 5-6 by end of year, which means we need more hosts and more leaders.
 - DNA groups – [new]
 - small same-sex groups of 3, meeting once/wk for Discipleship, Nurture, Accountability
 - exciting because they create opportunities for more people to be involved in discipleship
 - talk to Layci, Nancy K, Ryan for details
- some thoughtful changes –
 - Morning Prayers – will only run through Lent
 - Men's Samson Group – are going away (w/ options for guys to migrate to DNA groups)
 - the 72 (service) – we're scrapping monthly meetings, increasing commitments:
 1. regular attendance and weekly contribution at Sunday Worship (when absent, I will find someone else to fulfill my job).
 2. intentional service outside of Sunday Worship that promotes and extends the ministries and mission of All Souls.
 - monthly leaders meeting – mandatory monthly meeting for leaders
 - Movie Nights – starting soon, at least once a month, serve as another gateway to All Souls

3. On LOVING the city...

Q1. Why love the city? Because God does, and our welfare is inextricably linked to its welfare:

⁴"Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: ⁵Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat their produce. ⁶Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease. ⁷But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.

~ Jeremiah 29:4-7

- **This is not simply pragmatic** (eg. not just a strategy so people will start coming to our church, so we can have shaping influence in our culture)
- **This is a core value for us** (eg. we think God calls us to love the city because he wants to bless all sorts of people who would never just walk into a church on their own – and as we do this, we find we actually come to know God better, and to know ourselves)

Q2. So how are we doing? In terms of LOVING the city, we haven't actually accomplished a whole lot yet. We have a good vision, we are making some great initial steps, but this is the year we need to take a major step forward. We think our future as a church depends on it.

Q3. So how can we do better? By forming a new non-profit called **Imagine Missoula**.

- **Why "Imagine Missoula"?** - because we think Missoula is an amazing place, but we believe it could be even better, and we feel called to work to make it that way.
- **The "Mission" for Imagine Missoula** – “to foster deeper community in Missoula”
- **A. Key emphases (core values)...**
 - **1. mercy** – we need to find places where Missoula is broken and work to make them better, in ways that everyone can appreciate, with no strings attached. Today's "orphans, widows, and sojourners" are single moms, latchkey kids, the homeless and marginalized.
 - we will continue to support organizations like the Pov, YWCA, Big Brothers & Big Sisters (no reinventing the wheel)
 - we will identify and meet individual needs for at-risk folks that fall through the cracks – we can help people move, clean, make car repairs, home improvements, access social services, buy groceries, help with bills, temporary housing, etc.
 - we have got to get really good at IDENTIFYING NEEDS, RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS, and SPENDING MONEY WISELY
 - **2. beauty** – we believe that place matters, that we are called to be stewards of our environment and our neighborhoods.
 - we will continue to support organizations & efforts like Clark Fork River City Cleanup, re-seeding Mt. Sentinel, etc.
 - we will identify parks and structures that we can help improve & beautify (eg. adopting California St. Bridge, Lafray Park, Milwaukee Trail, etc)

- **3. arts** – we believe that the arts (music, dance, fine arts, etc) foster community and dialogue in amazing and unexpected ways.
 - we will continue to sponsor and support celebrations like Brewfest, First Fridays, and local musicians like Bethany & Grace
 - we will look for new ways to help support and encourage local artists, promote artistic expression, etc.
- **4. relational** – in all of our efforts, we want to prefer opportunities that allow us to build relationships (our goal is not simply to write checks; it's to connect people who can help with people in need to solve problems together – to invite folks into relationship)
- **5. spirituality** – many today regard spirituality as divisive or detrimental to community – bad experiences often drive us to adopt a "don't ask don't tell" mentality when it comes to sharing our personal convictions or asking others about theirs.

Unfortunately, *a*-spiritual community actually ends up being a shallower community – you will never experience truly deep relationships with others if you have to hide certain aspects of who you are and how you see the world; likewise, personal, private, un-tested spirituality often ends up being intellectually shallow and insensitive to people of different persuasions.

We think the community reaches it's zenith when we can be open and honest about our spiritual convictions without fear of getting rejected or excluded, where there is a great deal of spiritual diversity and dialogue and friendship (regardless of how much we differ).

As an organization, we will not be afraid to support causes or individuals that have a spiritual dimension, as long as they share our common values (see above).

- B. Many of these things cost money. **How do we fund Imagine Missoula?**
 - All Souls Missoula has set aside **\$11K** to help start / fund Imagine Missoula this year
 - By organizing Imagine Missoula as a separate non-profit, it's easier to apply for **grants**. At the same time, grants are an iffy proposition in our current economy, so we are not relying on grants for funding – our goal is to be grassroots and organic, to be able to function with very little revenue.
 - We are looking to develop **simple revenue streams** – things that we can do / sell in public space which will generate funds while increasing our visibility (eg. worship CD, t-shirts at farmers market, bottled water, All Souls Ale, coffee cart at out-to-lunch, etc)
 - why buy it? – "b/c all profit goes to meet local mercy needs right here in Missoula"
 - how is this possible? – "through generous sponsors & All Souls Missoula"
 - This approach creates all sorts of opportunities for **partnerships & volunteers** – in a way that allows people to participate without having to buy into our vision for church. It also creates opportunities for other churches to get involved in loving the city.
 - If we can succeed at a small level, it creates opportunities for **larger revenue streams** as well (eg. Mill-site development)
- **C. What we need most** – volunteers, partners, entrepreneurs (all w/ a vision for loving the city)

4. Ways to Make a Difference

It's actually remarkably easy to make a huge difference at All Souls (b/c there's so much need!)

1. **start praying regularly** for All Souls – for people, for pastors, for growth, for giving
2. **get involved** at All Souls – worship is the most important (and visible!) thing we do every week
3. **go deeper** into All Souls – plug into life with others (community groups, DNA groups); invite others into your life (coffee, lunch, dinner, drinks, friendships, struggles)
4. **own the vision** of All Souls – you 'own' a ministry when you stop thinking about it as 'them' and start thinking about it as 'us', stop thinking about what you 'want' and start thinking about what you can 'give'
5. **find a way to contribute** to All Souls – servants are people who find holes and fill them; leaders don't just plug holes, they recruit others, train them, and hand it off
6. **find a way to share** All Souls – invite a friend to parties, explorers, a service event, or just introduce them to Ryan and Christian or other friends at All Souls

Ways to help with *worship*...

- volunteer to help hang posters
- setup / takedown sandwich boards
- setup / takedown signs on all entrances
- setup chairs & make sure all the doors are unlocked
- **setup sound equipment**
- learn how to run the sound board
- learn how to record the sermons & upload to the website
- setup coffee table
- setup tea & brew hot water
- setup the book table
- setup the altar table
- help get bread, wine, candles, etc
- greet at the doors & pass out worship guides
- **look for visitors, introduce yourself, introduce them to someone else**
- **organize, recruit & schedule volunteers**
- **send weekly reminders to volunteers**
- track weekly attendance
- volunteer in the nursery
- create worship packs for young children (crayons, pages to color, etc)
- help lead worship – readers, musicians, singers, calls to worship, prayers of people, serve the Lord's Supper, etc.
- help w/ teardown after the service
- **help load the equipment into the car**
- invite a friend to come to worship
- **invite someone to lunch after the service**
- pray regularly for our worship services
- create / maintain a directory of contact info for friends & members
- etc.

Ways to help with *Imagine Missoula*...

- we need to get better at **identifying needs** (within All Souls and broader community)
- we need to get better at **recruiting volunteers** to help meet those needs
- we need to think of ways to be **generate revenue** to help fund these efforts
- we need to find ways **be more visible** in the community
- we need **organizational / logistical help** – setting up the non-profit, creating a logo, building the website, identifying projects, recruiting helpers, etc.
- if you want to get involved, talk to us!