



DIRECTION FOR 2009 AND BEYOND

1. **WHO ARE WE? (Our identity):** Through divine providence, God has created a diverse community¹ of broken² people who are looking³ to Christ for true healing.⁴
2. **WHY DO WE EXIST? (Our purpose):** To glorify God and enjoy him forever⁵ by living⁶ in the healthy realities of a restored⁷ relationship with one another⁸ and with God⁹. By doing so, we hope to offer an imperfect but refreshing foretaste of the Kingdom of Heaven.¹⁰
3. **WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO DO? (Our vision):** To grow¹¹ in grace¹² through the seasons of life.¹³
4. **HOW DO WE PLAN TO ACCOMPLISH WHAT WE'RE TRYING TO DO? (Our mission):** With the truths of the Gospel¹⁴, our mission is to engage¹⁵ in the lives of one another, the community, and the world resulting in healthy disciples¹⁶ of Christ for the glory of God and the enrichment of community.¹⁷

1 Providence is composed of people who are multigenerational and multinational, and who come with multi-denominational backgrounds (including un-churched backgrounds). There are many at Providence who have been disenchanting with church experiences in the past and seek a church that is honest, real and transparent.

2 An important aspect of our identity is that we acknowledge our brokenness before God as a result of sin. We are open and honest with our struggles and consider the church to be "a hospital for sick souls" (a phrase coined by St. Augustine). Reminding ourselves of these facts helps to foster an atmosphere of realness, vulnerability and transparency.

3 In his providence, God has assembled a group of people out of which over 50% have been trained as professionals in the local community to better people's lives. These include medical personnel (doctors, nurses, physical therapists, etc.), environmental specialists (chemical engineers, civil engineers, etc.), social workers, civil advocates (lawyers), academic advisors (educators, teachers, etc.), and spiritual & psychological professionals (pastors, therapists, counselors).

4 By healing, we mean that we are learning how to live in the abundant life that God has promised to his children. More specifically, John 10:10 states that the thief (Satan) comes only to steal, to kill and to destroy; but Christ has come that we might have life in abundance. This means Christ is healing us by reversing the effects of Satan. Having been *stolen*, we are now *redeemed* (doctrine of justification). Whereas sin brought *death*, we are being *revived* by the Gospel (doctrine of sanctification). And now coming away from a life of *destruction*, we are in the process of being *restored* – and looking for total restoration in the era of the consummation (doctrine of glorification).

5 Taken straight from question #1 of the Westminster Shorter Catechism, *man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever*. This is primarily accomplished through individual testimonies of God's salvation, living in the realities of a redeemed community, a lifestyle of dependency on God, corporate worship with the saints, on-going discipleship through personal mentoring, deeds of mercy, and world missions.

6 Ps 118:17 says, "I will not die, but live and proclaim what the Lord has done." We seek to live life to the fullest.

7 Through the atoning blood of Christ and the transforming power of the Gospel, we are reconciled with each other and with God. Themes of reconciliation also become part of our call as followers of Jesus. We are, as Paul writes: *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God (2 Cor. 5:17-20).*

8 Rom 15:5-6: *May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

9 Eph 2:13-22 talks of how Christ destroyed the dividing wall of hostility between God and us. Jesus is our peace.

10 By grace, we want to strive in all avenues of life and vocation to begin restoring what has been defiled by the Fall (in physical, spiritual, or emotional illness and in the environment) in order to give a glimpse of God's glory in creation.

11 Because the church is a dynamic organism created by the Spirit of God (as opposed to a static organization), we seek to grow. Such growth implies spiritual maturity in each individual, emotional growth in marriages and families, corporate growth in terms of biblical literacy and discipleship, numeric growth in terms of new members, and ecclesiastical growth in the establishment of daughter churches.

12 In Ephesians 4, Paul talks about the church being edified by grace. Because of this, we seek to grow as a direct result of the doctrines of grace at work in our lives (as opposed to growing through an assortment of programs, activities, or marketing strategies). Despite the pain of a broken world wrecked by sin, the message of the Gospel should transform us into a people of great love, devotion, peace and joy.

13 Since the inception of Providence Presbyterian Church, God has orchestrated its details through his amazing providence. We, therefore, want to continue to trace his hand in the direction of his church, recognizing his sovereign oversight through the ups and downs of life.

14 We believe that only the Gospel of Christ has the power to transform lives (Rom. 1:16 – *I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes...*).

15 The key word of our mission is "engage." Just as Christ incarnated himself to engage with us in our world, we seek to "incarnate" ourselves into the community around us to communicate God's love and truth. Engaging implies that we seek to penetrate into relationships in such a way that causes growth (even if, at times, the engaging brings about pain or discomfort).

16 This wording reflects the great commission of Christ, mandating us to be in the business of making disciples – as defined by going into all the world (i.e. engage), administering baptism in the Name of the triune God, teaching the doctrines of Christ, and resting in the authentic presence of Christ. (Matthew 28:19-20).

17 The church should be a blessing to the world around it. It is, as Jesus described, a city on a hill whose light should shine as a beacon for

5. **WHAT THINGS DO WE CONSIDER IMPORTANT?** (Our core values): Our values are shaped by the reality of the gospel of the Kingdom of God. All we do is governed by both the Word of God (His Truth) and the Spirit of God, who leads us into the truth and guides the church.¹⁸ Our values include:

- The supremacy of Jesus Christ as the only means of salvation¹⁹
- The grace of God as taught in the holy, inspired and inerrant Word of God²⁰
- The importance of a community created by the Spirit of God²¹
- Hearts of worship²² and joy²³
- Excellence in all things²⁴

6. **HOW ARE WE ORGANIZED TO ACCOMPLISH OUR VISION?** (Our organizational structure):

As a Presbyterian Church, Providence is governed by men who have been ordained into offices of servant-leadership. That is to say, leadership is conducted with a servant's heart, washing the feet of the saints.²⁵

The elders²⁶ oversee the ministries of the church, teach the doctrines of our faith, pray for and shepherd the members of the congregation, assist in the administration of the sacraments, and, when necessary, engage in church discipline. The deacons are also men ordained into office to help maintain the ongoing ministries of the church as they relate to the welfare of the members, ministering to the poor in the community, and upkeep of the physical plant.

Under the oversight of the session (group of elders), the ministries of the church are run by ministry teams. Each team is made up of men and women from the congregation and has a specific purpose. The teams are organized under what we call the six petals of ministry: worship²⁷, edification²⁸, fellowship²⁹, service³⁰, witness³¹, and stewardship.³²

7. **WHAT ARE THE MINISTRY TEAMS?** (The teams under the six petals of ministry):

WORSHIP

- **Worship Ministry Team:** Oversees worship and the various worship bands.
- **Audio/Visual Ministry Team:** controls the audio and visual components of worship services.
- **Prayer Ministry Team:** Oversees the prayer ministry, which includes maintaining the weekly prayer list as well as organizing our routine times of prayer.
- **Aesthetics Team:** Promotes and maintains the beauty of the church.

the world (Matthew 5:14-16). We, therefore, seek to be a blessing to our community (and world) through God-glorifying worship, deeds of mercy, orthodox doctrine, edifying gatherings, artistic creations, relational-building celebrations, and world missions. Eventually, and as God blesses, we desire to offer more benefits to the community through a day-care & pre-school, a community pub & restaurant, and a Christian counseling & therapy center.

18 As a particular church we are members of the Presbyterian Church of America (PCA) and follow the Reformed system of doctrine as is taught in the *Westminster Confession of Faith* and *Shorter Catechism*. For a detailed list of our denomination's beliefs, visit: www.pcanet.org.

19 Acts 4:12: *Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.*

20 The grace of God is our most central value and orientation. We hold to the inerrancy of Scripture and the Reformed system of doctrine which emphasizes the grace of God in Christ alone for salvation (Eph. 2:8-9), and that all of our lives are to be an offering of praise to Him.

21 The basic structure of the local congregation is a community – a corporate expression of love, reconciliation, industry, diversity of gifts, and unity of purpose.

22 Our view is that worship should be a life-style and not just what we do corporately once a week. Our lives should be a continual offering of praise to God.

23 We are a people whose hearts have been embraced and transformed by grace so that the world might be drawn to Christ through our joy. We believe that we reflect the joy of the Father as we carry out His purposes (Luke 15).

24 God created a world of astounding beauty. All that was made was designed and ordered by God. As His redeemed image-bearers, we seek to adorn the truth of the gospel with aesthetic beauty. Every area of human activity is capable of a redeemed expression, to the Glory of God. We do not merely believe that the arts may be redeemed for God, but that they should especially be so.

25 John 13:12-17: *When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.*

26 The New Testament Greek word for elder is *presbuteros*, from where we get "presbyterian."

27 By Worship we mean preaching, prayer, sacraments and songs that are *God-centered, evangelistic and aesthetic*.

28 By Edification we mean the building up of the entire body and the equipping of ourselves for the *ministry of grace* that is shaped by God's gifts of grace.

29 By Fellowship we mean *being together* as God's redeemed people and *inviting others* to join with us. Fellowship is not an exclusive activity for believers. It is *inclusive*—we invite others to "taste and see that the Lord is good," to experience the joy we share and to be loved and welcomed.

30 By Service we mean incarnating the love of Christ through deeds of mercy and justice in our community.

31 By Witness we mean that the entire church, *every living member* is the vehicle God has created by His Spirit to bear witness and testify to the gospel of God's grace. As a church, we want to create passionate missionaries who bear witness in the community (and not little theologians with a bunch of head knowledge).

32 By Stewardship we mean cultural renewal and management of God's gifts and resources.

EDIFICATION

- **Next Generation Ministry Team:** Oversees the Christian discipleship of the covenant children (infants through college age).
- **Adult Education Ministry:** Oversees the adult education in terms of Christian Education (Sunday School) and Men's & Women's ministries.

FELLOWSHIP

- **Celebrations Team:** Plans and executes all the special events and gatherings.
- **Community Groups:** Small groups that meet in geographic locations during the week with the goal of fostering community.

SERVICE

- **Mercy Ministries Team:** Mercy ministries are divided up into two branches: passive and active.
 - Passive Mercy: responding to requests and needs that come to us from the church body and community.
 - Active Mercy: actively addressing needs in the community through partnering with local ministries and motivating the church to get involved.

WITNESS

- **Missions Team:** Oversees the partnership of Providence with ministry leaders, para-church ministries, and international missionaries.

STEWARDSHIP

- **Finance Ministry Team:** Ensures wise stewardship of the resources that God has entrusted to our church; sets up and oversees the annual budget, maintains the bills and payroll.
- **Communications Ministry Team:** Oversees the various modes of communication: website, bulletins, signs, brochures, etc.
- **Diaconal Team:** Led by the deacons, this team oversees the routine maintenance of the physical plant.