

Vision Sunday 2016 - Generous

December 4, 2016

Welcome to CrossWinds. This morning is a little different. I am stepping away from Genesis for a week so we can talk about CrossWinds Church and our vision for the future.

Why are we doing this on a Sunday? Many of you come to CrossWinds and you don't know much about what drives us. You don't know why we do what we do. You don't know about CrossWind's past and you know even less about CrossWind's hope for the future. It seemed wise to take one Sunday and do a state-of-the-church address so everyone knows who we are, where we have been, where we are going and how I am asking you to get involved to help get us there.

This morning, I have four things I want to do. First, I want to familiarize everyone with the CrossWinds mission. I will show you where to find it and explain it in an easy way for everyone to understand. Second, I want to share the CrossWinds story. I want us to see how the CrossWind's mission guided this church to make crucial decisions in the past and how it is helping us make crucial decisions for our future. Third, I want to share with you the specific goals we have to live out the CrossWinds mission for the next 5 years. Fourth, I want to unashamedly ask you to put your shoulder to the wheel. I want to challenge you to get involved and have the CrossWind's vision for the future as your vision so together we can do what none of us could on our own.

What is the CrossWinds mission?

If you are new, many of you many not know where to find the CrossWinds mission statement. It is easier to find than you think. In the foyer, before you enter the center doors of the sanctuary, the CrossWind's mission statement is on the wall. Just as you take a rifle to the range and sight it in before you go on a hunt, the CrossWinds mission statement is what we use to help us sight in the programs and goals of CrossWinds church. It is what we use to calibrate the CrossWinds family.



There are four parts. Let me show them to you. I would like to explain each of them around the key word "generous."

Generous God — Passion for God

At CrossWinds, we want to be a church that is passionate for God, in particular we want to be passionate for God's son, Jesus Christ. The only way to fall in love with God is to immerse ourselves in the Word of God. This is why we

teach from the Bible. The Bible tells us the only way for spiritual life to begin is through encountering God's Word.

since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; 1 Peter 1:23 (ESV)

The Bible also tells us God's Word doesn't just create spiritual life but it sustains our spiritual life.

But he answered, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" Matthew 4:4 (ESV)

This is the reason we keep our finger in the text. This is also why we have CrossWinds University classes which offer deeper study of the Bible. It is why we have Life Groups where we put our finger in the text and study the Bible more. This is why children in AWANA are learning the Word of God. This is why CW Kids are learning the Bible. This is why Pastor Stephen teaches the Bible to our teenagers.

We believe the foundation of everything is not just knowing God's Word as information. The Holy Spirit uses God's Word to produce spiritual illumination. The word of God shows us our sinfulness and it leads us to repentance. It also shows us God's incredible love for us through Jesus. The more we study the Word of God, the more we grow in our comprehension of how incredibly good, kind and loving God is to us through Jesus. The word of God shows us we are blessed beyond measure through Jesus. The word of God shows us this. That is why we must keep our find in the word.

We will spend our entire lives learning more about the incredible amount of grace God has for us through Jesus and God's good plans for all of eternity through Jesus and we will only begin to scratch the surface of comprehending

God's goodness to us. We find we have an incredibly generous God to us through Jesus. This is why we teach about Christ. This is why our worship music is focused on Christ. This is why passion for God is the foundation of all we do.

Generous Living — Compassion for our Neighbor

The second part of our vision is compassion for our neighbor. Jesus said the greatest commandment is to love God with all our heart, soul and mind. The second greatest commandment is to love our neighbor as ourselves. Why do we love our neighbors? We don't love our neighbors because it is the right thing to do. We don't love our neighbor because the good thing to do or the postmodern social kindness thing to do. The Bible tells us why we love our neighbor.

We love because he first loved us. 1 John 4:19 (ESV)

The more we comprehend how much God loves us, the more we will love people, even hard to love people. The love God has for us flows through our veins. We love others more as a response to how God has loved us through Jesus. The generous love of our God toward us leads us to generous love in our lives to others.

Let me say this again. The way we love others *is a response to the love God has for us*. We love others lavishly because God loves us lavishly. We love others who don't deserve it because God loves us even when we don't deserve it. We forgive others when they sin against us because God has forgiven our sin against him. This is why passion for God—the generous love of God—is the foundation of everything at CrossWinds. We will not love our neighbor lavishly

until the Holy Spirit has opened our eyes through his Word to help us understand how lavishly God loves us.

Generous Church — Reaching our Region

The third part of our mission is to reach our region. While compassion toward our neighbor and generous living is our personal response to God's love toward us, reaching our region is our church-wide response to God's love for us. Our church vision statement predates me. It has always been the CrossWinds vision to not just reach our community for Christ but to reach our entire region with the good news of Christ. It is interesting to show how God didn't just build a regional vision into the CrossWinds family. God build the CrossWinds family from people all around our region. People come from as far away as Sibley, Rock Rapids, Jackson, Lakefield, Spencer, Estherville and Armstrong. CrossWinds has always been a church with a regional vision and influence. While we found people may drive 40 to 60 minutes one-way to come to CrossWinds, it is hard to reach a city 30 or more minutes away from CrossWinds. For years, how to effectively reach the cities around our region was something we didn't know how to do.

Reaching Beyond our Region

The fourth part of our mission is to reach beyond our region through supporting and participating in missions to spread the good news of Jesus around the world.

That is the mission of CrossWinds Church. This is how we sight in our programs, ministries and church energy. We also have core values—also called our fingerprint—but we will not be talking about them this morning.

Let me show you how our mission guided CrossWinds in the past.

How did the CrossWind's mission guide us in the past?

CrossWinds began in 1949. In 1973 the church acquired this property and built the old worship center, which is now called the Commons and used primarily by our youth. Early in CrossWind's history, in 1981, CrossWinds began AWANA. Why did they start AWANA? It was a strategic decision by the leadership of the church to not just raise our children to love Christ by teaching the word of God but the AWANA program would help us live generous lives, love our neighbors and be a generous church that reached our region by providing a community kids program where kids could come to learn about Christ and God's love for them through Jesus. AWANA was birthed from our mission.

Ten years later, in 1990, CrossWinds outgrew the little worship center. Rather than build a bigger worship center to give us more comfort, in an effort to love our neighbors and reach our region and live a generous life towards toward our neighbors and region, CrossWinds decided to build a gym. There was empty green space where we now sit. The decision to build a gym before a worship center was a strategic decision made by the leadership of the church to follow this mission statement and focus on reaching the region before comfort for ourselves.

Ten years later, in 2000, the worship center we sit in today was completed. In 2008, when I arrived, there was over a quarter million dollars of debt staring us in the face and monopolizing our budget. The board made a strategic decision to focus on paying off the mortgage to free up operational funds so we could focus on being a more generous church and better reach our region. The congregation responded more than 250,000 came in above and beyond budget. The building was paid in only 2 years. In 2010 we accomplished the goal and began exploring how to better accomplish our mission of showing compassion to our neighbor and reaching our region.

It was at that time we began exploring the idea of multisite. It was a new line of thinking but it was in line with our mission or trying to not just reach our city but our region. Instead of just building our campus larger, we decided to be generous people that would focus on opening campuses around our region.

Why would we open another campus? First, we discovered while there are additional churches in our region, not many believe in the authority of the Bible. There are less that teach from the Bible. This is why people are driving an hour each way to come to CrossWinds. Bible-teaching churches are in short supply.

In addition, only one in seven people in our region attend church. We realized there is ample room to add more churches in our community.



Why did we choose to go multisite instead of church plant? While both ways are good methods of growing churches, we believe God

called us to multisite so our campuses could work together to do together what we couldn't do on our own.

The church body gave of themselves financially as we felt God leading us to open a campus in Spencer. We moved in that direction with acquiring equipment and hiring Pastor Jordan.

Prior to opening our commitment to our mission was once again tested with our church name. We used to be called Faith Church. It was a great name. We had a great heritage with that name. In the Spencer community, there were already two Faith Churches. It seemed unloving to our region and to our new campus to bring a third Faith Church to the Spencer community and add to the confusion. We had to make a decision. While we loved our name, did we love our mission more? I was so proud of the congregation as we went through the hard process of changing our name because we were committed to letting go of the name we loved to better reach our region for Jesus.

What happened in the last three years with our Spencer campus? In 2013, we opened the Spencer campus. It began with 8 families. Today they average 125 in attendance and had 200 in attendance at Easter. God has been good.

Where are we going in the next 5 years?

Just as our forefathers made crucial decisions based on the mission of CrossWinds to love our neighbors and reach our region. In response to our generous God our forefathers decided to live generous lives and be a generous church through starting AWANA, through building a gym before a sanctuary, through paying off a debt early and through opening another campus. Today the

baton is in our hands. The decisions we make today need to carry forward the mission of reaching our region. If we don't, five years from today CrossWinds will be no different and our region will not be reached.



Let me share the key strategic moves we want to make in the next 5 years and the part each of us needs to play to make it happen.

Passion for God — Generous God

In the next 5 years, not much is changing in this area. We still plan to preach from the Bible and focusing on Christ centered worship. We plan on continuing to teach quality CWU classes and Life Groups, AWANA and CW Kids. We want to do everything we can to know God better through his word and be more captivated by the love of Christ. The one thing we are going to do is build more church leaders to help us launch more campuses.

Compassion for our Neighbor — Generous Living

This is an area we want to sharpen. This spring, as we prepare for Easter, Pastor Jordan and I will teach a series called Generous Living. Generous Living will be a big focus this year. Just as Jesus generously loved us, we want to generously love those around us. The series will be based off the Good Samaritan story and we will focus on loving people by being generous in three areas of our lives. First is our time. In our busy world, time is in short supply. To love people like Jesus loved us, we need to consciously give them time. Second, we will also focus on being generous with our heart. That means more than just giving our time but opening our heart and being vulnerable. It means genuinely

caring. Lastly we will focus on being generous with our finances and helping those with financial needs. We see all of these in the Good Samaritan story.

Reaching our Region — Generous Church

Just as each of us wants to focus on living a life of generous love towards others in our personal lives because God has loved us so generously through Jesus, as a church, we want to move our vision of reaching our region for Jesus forward. What are some of our strategic church-wide goals for the next 5 years? First, we want to help the Spencer campus find and obtain a permanent facility. We have focused on this for over a year and there is not a lot of options in Spencer. One thing we have learned is when buildings of the size we need become available, they are sold quickly. The last one we looked at this fall sold from under us in a week. As a church, if God opens the door for a building, we will need to be nimble and prepared to purchase the facility. This will most likely not be a tradition drawn-out building process but we will need to be prepared with cash so we can act.

Another big goal in the next five years is opening another campus. I don't know where it will be. We have people at CrossWinds from Ayrshire, Emmettsburg, Sibley and Jackson. We don't know where the next campus will be but we do know that two campuses working together are able to do much more than we could on our own. We want to open a a third campus and continue reaching our region.

In addition, we are considering not just opening an additional campus but offering an additional venue. I don't know if it will work but I would love to try a

Saturday night campus here at the Spirit Lake campus during the summer to provide an alternate worship time for those busy working on Sunday in the summer.

Reaching Beyond our Region

When it comes to reaching our world, Pastor Jordan and I are asking you to join us in praying that God will raise up one full-time missionary from each of our campuses in the next 5 years. We are asking God to take what he has done CrossWinds and reach around the world and lead others to Christ through what he does here.

The baton is in our hand. Our predecessors at CrossWinds made strategic decisions to live by our mission of passion for God, compassion for our neighbors, reaching our region and beyond with the good news of Jesus Christ. Now is our turn to run with the mission.

This morning, I am introducing one of the key funding tools that will make many of these large missional steps possible. It is called the CrossWinds Legacy Foundation. Gifts to the foundation will be used by the leadership board for these large missional steps of hiring additional staff, purchasing facilities and opening additional campuses. These are things that don't fit well in a regular operating budget so we will have a special foundation for them. To be true to our mission all gifts given to the vision fund will have 5% diverted into a special missions fund to help us launch missionaries on the field and 5% will go to a special benevolent fund administered by the elders to help us extend better compassion to those in serious need in our church and community. Next week we will have brochures

about this fund available. Today I want to show you a short video so you can learn more about it.

Show Video - <https://vimeo.com/194202165>

How do I respond?

The baton is in each of our hands. The question is, what will we do with it. Let me give you specific ways I am challenging you to move the mission forward.

1. Decide to move from a spectator to a participant. My predecessor had a great saying. He said that on this boat there are no passengers, only crew members. Many of us attend CrossWinds but we haven't grabbed an oar and started rowing. Today, I challenge you to get involved in the CrossWinds family, don't just attend but get involved. Move from the being a spectator to a player.
2. Become a member. If you haven't joined, membership classes begin again in January. Mark the Member box on the response card and my secretary will get ahold of you.
3. Become a faithful attender of your CrossWinds family. Many people come only one or two Sundays a month. Today make the choice to be a faithful member. Don't just choose to be a faithful attender but choose to get involved. Sign up to serve. Become a greeter, an usher, help at the coffee bar, if you play an instrument offer to help in the band.
4. Commit to living a generous lifestyle. I know this is an emphasis we will have in the spring but there is nothing wrong with starting now. It simply means choosing to give people your time, open your heart and open your wallet. Will

you genuinely care for people like Christ genuinely and sacrificially cares for us.

5. Participate in a legacy foundation meeting. The dates of the meetings are: December 11, 13, 18 or 20. Commit to attending one to learn more about the foundation and how to get involved and make CrossWind's future reality. This foundation is not just for people with disposable income but it is for all of us.
6. Commit to praying God would raise up a missionary from each of our campuses in the next 5 years.

Today the baton is in our hand. We have a generous God. The one who created the universe humbled himself to die in our place to completely save us from our sin and to bless us beyond our wildest dreams. In response to that love, let us live lives of generous love for one another and may we be a generous church that sacrifices ourself to reach not just our city but the entire region and the world with the good news of Jesus.

In a moment, we will take the Lord's Supper. We will spend time thanking God the Father for sending his son to die for us and worshipping Jesus for humbling himself to do his father's will and save us. As we take communion, spend time thanking God for his generous love, let the Holy Spirit prompt you to live a generous live and may we joint together to be a generous church.



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