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## Christ the Servant Lutheran Church

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## Our Mission

Called by God to share the Good News,  
we are the hands of Christ

- lifted in worship
- joined in learning
- extended in service
- supporting in love
- reaching for justice.

## We Believe

We believe in God our creator,  
and are awed by the mystery of creation.

We believe we are saved by God's grace  
through our Lord, and Savior, Jesus Christ.

We believe the word and spirit of God  
are the guiding force in our lives.

## We Pledge

### **To be a worshipping community**

Worship is where we share our faith and seek a closer relationship with God. It is a celebration of community and our preparation before going out into the world as servants. Through worship, we are challenged by those at the pulpit to live as Christ wanted us to live, not as the world wants us to live. Worship is where "the scales fall away from our eyes" and we experience God clearly and strongly.

- We worship God through God's word, prayer, confession, and the sacraments, using music, song, art and drama to enhance these core elements.
  - The Holy Spirit ignites our passion, fills us and strengthens us to be God's presence in the world.
  - We grow in faith and understanding as we hear and respond to the word of God.
  - Worship reinforces our prayerfulness.
  - Worship emboldens us to share the Good News.
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### **To be a learning community**

Although we are all at different places in our faith journey and in our relationship with God, we believe the potential is there for all of us to be both teachers and learners as we share our beliefs, experiences and methods of taking action. Ultimately we seek to learn and teach so that we can prepare ourselves for work in the world. We have a tradition of a rigorous confirmation program, and it is the model that forms our vision for all the education programs at CTS.

- We provide quality life-long Christian education for all ages.
- We seek to deepen our faith through the study of scripture.
- We teach Lutheran traditions.
- We create a safe place for inquiry.
- We talk openly and listen with our hearts.
- We equip members for discipleship and service, and to differentiate themselves, as Christians, from the culture of the world.

### **To be a serving community**

Recognizing the overwhelming need to relieve suffering in our world and that service is one of the best ways of sharing the Gospel as well as strengthening our own faith, our founders named this congregation Christ the Servant— placing service at the heart of our mission. As good stewards, we seek to make positive change by sharing our time, our talents, and our offerings as individuals and collectively as a church.



- We use our gifts to work actively in our local area to demonstrate God's love and desire for relief for those who suffer.
- We extend this mission to the world outside Whatcom County.
- We actively partner with other organizations and faith communities.
- We serve as individuals letting our own interests and abilities guide us to meet the need locally and globally.
- We seek to serve a single mission collectively as a church.

### **To be a loving community**

We are a deeply caring community. We support and nurture each other to develop our life in Christ, providing the necessary space for God to work through our hospitality to others. We provide opportunities for meaningful participation in the mission of the church by recognizing each other's gifts.

- We assist each other to identify and use our spiritual gifts.
- We seek to build trust by being kind, loving, caring, and respectful.
- We establish an inclusive environment where all can grow in Christian faith and understanding.
- We invite and welcome newcomers, and integrate them into the life of the congregation.

## To be a justice-seeking community

We actively involve ourselves in the missions of promoting justice, peacemaking, and healing by demonstrating God's love and desire for relief for those who suffer. The community surrounding CTS would come to know us by our example and we would encourage community members to stand together with us as witnesses and in service.



- We empower the poor, strengthen the weak, embrace the outcast and seek the lost.
- We equip members for moral deliberation based on God's desire for justice.
- We strive for justice for those who are marginalized or are being persecuted.
- We are prayerful and ready to meet the changing needs of the church, the community and the world while striving to live faithfully in a culture that challenges our Christian values.

## Strategic Initiatives

### 1) Worship

**Continue to share worship as celebration of God's grace and as preparation for service as we seek to share these gifts with an even greater number of people.**

- a) Assess current worship services to consider other formats and times to meet needs of different segments of CTS population and families, and the community at large (e.g., students, singles, families with small children, those who work weekends).
- b) Celebration and exploration of new formats should be in concert with the "worshipping community" elements described in our vision.

### 2) Common ministry

**As a community concerned with social justice, serve together a single outreach ministry prayerfully, financially, and materially for a period of at least two years followed by a period of renewal.**

- a) Take action based on prayer.
- b) Brainstorm together as a community to choose a common ministry that has wide appeal, that every person at CTS could participate in, and that families could work on together. Focus can be local, global or a combination of both (e.g., homelessness, foster care, mission of peacemaking).
- c) Raise financial support for the ministry through a capital campaign.
- d) Research social justice issues associated with the common ministry, producing a spiritually sound report on how we think God is guiding us to respond to the issues. Share the results publicly—a call for change in a troubled world. It will serve as a respected resource for community leaders and attract people to the source of this call.

- e) Support the common ministry through programming in all areas (e.g. education and training programs to support the ministry and to deal with tough issues or areas of potential conflict; worship to incorporate new culture or ideas, etc.).
- f) After gathering information and training CTS members, implement the ministry, actively involving each person with the goal of being Christ's hands as we demonstrate God's love and bring relief to those who suffer.
- g) During periods when we are serving a common ministry, continue our support of other ongoing outreach ministries.

### 3) Small groups

**Fully integrate every person in the CTS community—CTS members and their families as well as regular attendees and visitors into small groups, and transform these small groups into loving communities whose members share a common ministry and support each other in deepening their faith.**

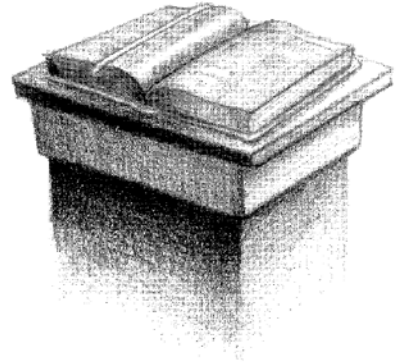
- a) Create a caring community among task-oriented groups (e.g. ministry teams, service teams, etc.) and encourage groups with a relationship focus to take on a common ministry (e.g. house groups, young mothers group). Hestenes' *"Turning Committees into Communities"* can be used as a resource to guide us in this process.
- b) Improve our incorporation of newcomers, visitors, older members, and those in need into small groups that can support and challenge them within CTS.
- c) Develop mentors to oversee transformation from within groups and identify ways to enhance quality of life for people in the group.
- d) Integrate visitors, newcomers and their families early on.
- e) Reintegrate members and their families regularly.
- f) Structure groups to be inclusive, to leave "the open chair."
- g) Pray at each gathering.
- h) Commit to creating new small groups.
- i) Commit to raising up new leaders and equip them to serve and lead, through pastoral and lay led sessions.
- j) Small groups are defined as every small gathering outside of worship. (e.g. ministry teams, choirs, classes, service teams, house groups, care teams, etc.).



#### 4) Learning community

**Develop a varied, rich and comprehensive education program that transcends the current structure and reaches into our community and homes.**

- a) Develop the education program for all age groups, including *Catch the Son Preschool* and adult programs.
- b) Offer learning opportunities at multiple times and locations, with a variety of formats, including independent study and trainings.
- c) Include opportunities for families and other cross-age groups to learn together.
- d) Equip the people of CTS to be more involved and effective in sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Strengthen our faith and boldness through and for evangelism.
- e) Equip friends and families to learn together in their homes.
- f) Development should be driven by the “learning community” elements identified in our vision.



#### 5) Governance

**Shape the governing structure, staffing and practices at CTS to more effectively serve a church our size.**

- a) Drawing on the best resources available on the topic, research strategies other growing congregations have used to become more effective.
- b) In prayer ask God for guidance, spend time listening for God’s direction, and move on what we hear.
- c) Build a communication structure within our church that effectively insures that members voices are heard, acknowledged, respected and valued.
- d) Improve communication and coordinate actions with other local churches and agencies.
- e) Commit to staffing which best enables the transformation to the programmatic model of a church of our size.