

**Growing Together In G.R.A.C.E.: Fully Alive Christian Disciples at BPC
November 2008**

"The glory of God is a human being fully alive." Irenaeus, ca. 170 AD

**What is our hope for all members of Bidwell Presbyterian Church?
That we would become fully alive disciples of Jesus Christ, following
Jesus's Great Commandment in Matthew 22:35-40**

³⁵ *One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question:* ³⁶ *"Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?"* ³⁷ *Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.'* ³⁸ *This is the first and greatest commandment.* ³⁹ *And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'* ⁴⁰ *All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."*

Specifically, we hope that all members of the church will

1. Love God

"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength" (Deuteronomy 6:4-5).

2. Love one another in the church

"You shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD" (Leviticus 19:18).

3. Love those outside the church

"And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore 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 that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age'" (Matthew 28:18-20).



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growing deep growing up growing out

By the grace of God and in the power of the Holy Spirit, fully alive disciples of Jesus Christ GROW DEEP (personal growth in love for God), GROW UP (corporate growth in love for one another in the church), and GROW OUT (missional growth in love for those outside the church) in the Core Values of G.R.A.C.E. (Grace, Reaching Out, Authenticity, Celebration, and Extravagant Generosity) as follows:

FULLY ALIVE CHRISTIAN DISCIPLES	Grow Deep (personal love for God)	Grow Up (corporate love for one another in the church)	Grow Out (missional love for those outside the church)
Grace	G: Know the grace of Jesus Christ and love him with their whole lives	G: Give and receive grace in community	G: Express God's grace in the world
Reaching out	R: Define themselves as ambassadors of God's grace	R: Live as ambassadors of God's grace called to love others in community	R: Engage as ambassadors of God's grace called to share what they have received
Authenticity	A: Are transparent before God	A: Allow themselves and others to be real in community	A: Live as authentic people serving the world
Celebration	C: Celebrate God	C: Celebrate all aspects of life in community	C: Celebrate and declare God's goodness and hope in the world
Extravagant Generosity	E: Live with a heartfelt response to God's gifts	E: Share all they are and have in community	E: Share all they are and have in the world

Grace

"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God— not the result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life" (Ephesians 2:8-10).

Growing Deep in Grace (Personal growth in love for God)

Fully alive disciples know the grace of Jesus Christ and love him with their whole lives.

What this looks like in their lives:

- Understand Jesus, as he is attested in Scripture, confess him as Lord and Savior, and accept his Lordship in all aspects of their lives
- Recognize that God has sought them out first and saved them in his grace knowing that God loves them just as they are, but will not let them stay the same
- Invite the Holy Spirit into personal lives so that the gifts and fruit of the Spirit may grow and flourish
- Live and learn the Christian faith through ministries for Christian formation (such as care groups, Real Life Groups, discipleship classes, and discipleship triads)
- Have vital, growing devotional lives marked by daily Scripture reading, allowing God's word to shape their lives
- Know and practice the spiritual disciplines such as prayer, priority percentage giving, and Sabbath keeping

Growing Up in Grace (corporate love for one another in the church):

Fully alive disciples give and receive grace in community.

What this looks like in their lives:

- Love people within the church with a compassionate, open, and non-judgmental attitude
- Are in a small, intentional community in which they can give and receive unconditional love, as well as instruction and support in following Jesus
- Have intimate, Christ-centered relationships in which they are offered God's grace and held accountable
- Invite the Holy Spirit to empower the community's ministry
- Seek to grow and be transformed by God's grace in and through community and faithful participation in corporate worship

Growing Out in Grace (missional love for those outside the church):

Fully alive disciples express God's grace in the world.

What this looks like in their lives:

- Define themselves as ambassadors of God's grace called into the lives of people to generously share what they have received
- Love those outside the church with a compassionate, open, and non-judgmental attitude

- Love people right where they are, not making projects out of people
- Are able and willing to witness to God's grace in their own lives to others

Reaching Out

“Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you...” (Jeremiah 29:7).

“All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ, God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us...” (2 Corinthians 5:18-20).

Growing Deep in Reaching Out (Personal love for God):

Fully alive disciples define themselves as ambassadors of God's grace.

What this looks like in their lives:

- View themselves as ambassadors of God's grace to a hurting world
- Allow the heart of God for the lost to become their heart for the lost, with a specific emphasis on the poor
- Take part in small, intentional communities where members view themselves as embassies of God's grace, serving those beyond those communities
- Are in tune and open to the impulses and calling of the Holy Spirit
- Pray regularly for those who do not yet know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior
- View each moment as an opportunity to share God's grace

Growing Up in Reaching Out (Corporate love for one another in the church):

Fully alive disciples are ambassadors of God's grace called to love others in community.

What this looks like in their lives:

- Are part of a small, intentional community that views themselves as embassies of God's grace, serving those beyond the group
- Support and develop effective outreach ministries to extend the Kingdom of God in Chico and Butte County
- Reach out to those who are new, returning, or disconnected from the life of the church and include them in community (such as Real Life Groups, classes, retreats, fellowship groups, worship services)
- Reach out to the different generations present at Bidwell Presbyterian Church
- Act as instruments of reconciliation, intentionally crossing over barriers within the church, such as race, economic, marital status

Growing Out in Reaching Out (missional love for those outside the church):

Fully alive disciples are ambassadors of God's grace called to share what they have received.

What this looks like in their life:

- Seek to be equipped with the tools to learn and to grow deeper in the Christian faith and to be able to constructively engage the culture as a Christian
- Live out the calling to share God's grace at work, home, school, marketplace- wherever they are
- Demonstrate specific compassion for the poor and oppressed
- Allow their relationships to be the primary vehicle for sharing God's grace with those outside the church

Authenticity

“O LORD, you have searched me and known me” (Psalm 139:1).

“Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And all of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another...”

(2 Corinthians 3:17-18).

Growing Deep in Authenticity (Personal love for God):

Fully alive disciples are real before God.

What this looks like in their lives:

- Live transparently before God, readily confessing their disobedience, fears, frustrations, doubts, anger, and flaws to God
- Continually ask God for forgiveness, trusting God for mercy and grace
- Offer themselves completely to God in regular private worship such as daily devotionals, scripture reading, and prayer
- Seek to understand their God-given gifts

Growing Up in Authenticity (Corporate love for one another in the church):

Fully alive disciples allow themselves and others to be transparent in community.

What this looks like in their lives:

- Admit fears and flaws in a small, intentional Christian community
- Give and receive care and seek wholeness in community
- Allow themselves to be held accountable as Christ’s disciple in a small, intentional community
- Extend God’s grace to others in the congregation as they confess their fears and flaws

Growing out in Authenticity (Missional love for those outside the church):

Fully alive disciples live as authentic people serving the world.

What this looks like in their life:

- Invite others into an authentic relationship with Jesus Christ
- Are transparent in the relationship they have with those outside the church
- Invite others to be authentic and transparent through loving, grace-filled relationships
- Allow others to express their concerns, questions, and doubts about God and the church
- Are open to learning from others as much or even more than feeling the need to teach or transmit faith

Celebration

“Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth.

Worship the Lord with gladness;

come into his presence with singing” (Psalm 100:1-2).

“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice!” (Philippians 4:4).

Growing Deep in Celebration (Personal, love for God):

Fully alive disciples celebrate God.

What this looks like in their lives:

- Have lives marked by laughter and joy
- Live with joyful trust in God’s grace and with hope for what God will bring to their lives
- Know and celebrate the narrative of God’s love for them in the Scripture
- Enjoy God through corporate and private times of worship, devotion, and prayer
- View all of life as an act of worship, celebration, and sacrifice to God

Growing Up in Celebration (Corporate, love for one another in the church):

Fully alive disciples celebrate all aspects of life in community

What this looks like in their lives:

- Enjoy laughter and joy with the family of God.
- Readily and regularly pray, study Scripture, worship, sing, and serve in a small, intentional community and in the congregation in response to God’s grace
- Live in the covenant community which tells and celebrates the biblical stories of God’s grace from Genesis to Revelation
- Participate in a small, intentional community and in the congregation, celebrating all aspects of life together
- Call out and celebrate the gifts of others in the Body of Christ.

Growing Out in Celebration (Missional love for those outside the church):

Fully alive disciples celebrate and declare God’s goodness and hope in the world.

What this looks like in their lives:

- Give God glory for the gifts they have received
- Witness to the Bible’s testimony to God’s love for the city and for the world and offer hope of a coming new heaven and new earth
- Offer the hope of Christ to those who are hopeless, sad, oppressed, or in need, bringing them into the celebration of God’s Kingdom
- Seek the Kingdom of God through acts of justice and righteousness in the world, especially in places that are dark and hurting

Extravagant Generosity

“So deeply do we care for you that we are determined to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves...” (1 Thessalonians 2:8).

“Now as you excel in everything—in faith, speech, in knowledge, in utmost eagerness, and in our love for you—so we want you to excel also in this generous undertaking” (2 Corinthians 8:7).

Growing Deep in Extravagant Generosity (Personal love for God):

Fully alive disciples live with a heartfelt response to God’s gifts.

What this looks like in their lives:

- Respond to God’s grace by offering their whole selves to God
- Seek to understand and use their spiritual gifts
- Seek to grow in their financial giving to the work of God in the world
- Give their time and energy to the work of God
- Develop margin in their lives: simplify life to free up time, resources, and talents in order to become generous people.

Growing up in Extravagant Generosity (Corporate, love for one another in the church):

Fully alive disciples share all they have and are in community.

What this looks like in their lives:

- Seek to meet the needs of those in the community of God’s people
- Freely share their spiritual gifts with those in the congregation
- Generously give their time and resources to those in the congregation

Growing out in Extravagant Generosity (Missional love for those outside the church):

Fully alive disciples share all they are and have in the world.

What this looks like in their life:

- Willingly share their resources with those outside the life of the church
- Use their spiritual gifts at home, at school, in the marketplace—everywhere they find themselves
- Give their time and money to have an impact on the world, both locally and globally, for the sake of the Kingdom of God

To summarize: In all these things, fully alive Christian disciples give glory to God through Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit.

“Whatever you do, whether in word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him” (Colossians 3:17).