

GAME PLAN

Amite Baptist Church

Revision 10
May 21, 2017
Amite Baptist Church

I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.
- Jesus in Matthew 16:18 ESV

Our Cause

Great Purpose

1 Corinthians 10:31 - *So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.*

Great Prayer

Matthew 6:9-13 - *Pray then like this: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."*

Great Commission

Matthew 28:18-20 - *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, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

Great Commands

Matthew 22:37-39 - *And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself."*

Great Sacrifice

John 15:12 - *"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you."*

Great Example

Acts 2:42-47 - *"And they were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. And everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles. And all those who had believed were together, and had all things in common; and they began selling their property and possessions, and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need. And day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved."*

The CAUSE (mission/purpose) of the church is non-negotiable. We exist to glorify God (Great Purpose) by seeking His Rule (Great Prayer) on earth in all things. We are to deliberately make disciple (Great Commission) of everyone by teaching them to love God and love each other (Great Commands) just as Christ did (Great Sacrifice). In doing these things, we are to emulate the model of the early church (Great Example).

Our Calling

Advancing the Kingdom of Jesus Together,
we passionately follow Jesus,
selflessly love others,
and intentionally make disciples.

Scripture References:

- **Advancing the Kingdom** - (Matthew 6:9-13, John 5:17, Matthew 16:19)
- **Passionately follow Jesus** - (Matthew 22:37, Luke 9:35, John 14:15) – “*in me*”
- **Selflessly love others** - (Matthew 22:39, Romans 12:10) – “*in my family*”
- **Intentionally make disciples** - (Matthew 28:18-20; 5:16, 2 Timothy 2:2) – “*in the world*”

Our calling is to advance the Kingdom of Jesus together. As a church our desire is to call all people, but primarily those who live within a reasonable driving distance of our campus, to be fully devoted followers of Christ (disciples). We want people to passionately follow Jesus, selflessly love others, and intentionally make disciples. This implies both introduction to and encouragement in a life of full devotion to Christ. We exist to reach the uncommitted, unchurched, de-churched, dead-churched and unmoved and to encourage, equip, serve and sustain those already devoted to Christ.

- **UN-CHURCHED**—those who have never been exposed to biblical church life
- **DE-CHURCHED**— those previously in a church environment but have left it
- **DEAD-CHURCHED**— those involved in a church not pursuing biblical Christianity
- **UNMOVED**— those nominally involved with Christ or His purposes

The calling (vision) of Amite Baptist Church is how we believe God wants us to partner with him in accomplishing the cause of the church. Our calling is discovered as we submit to Christ, listen to the Holy Spirit, and observe where God is working.

And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

- Matthew 16:18-19 ESV

Why we need a common calling?

1. It increases morale and reduces frustration.
2. It attracts cooperation.
3. It allows concentration or focus.
4. It assists in evaluation.

Our Convictions

A healthy church intentionally and zealously pursues a balanced ministry. Such a ministry, through the power of the Holy Spirit, results in:

1. New converts to Christ through the work of the ministry (SHARE).
2. New commitments to the local body and the cause of Christ (CONNECT).
3. New growth in the grace & knowledge of Christ (MINISTRY).
4. New leaders for tomorrow's harvest for Christ (DISCIPLE).

Stated another way, our desire is to call others to:

Believe in Christ

- Share Level – salvation, basic theology, church structure, and philosophy
- Reaching out to the un-churched and the de-churched.
- Ministries: 4xFour, Children, Youth, Men, Women, Sports, Recovery, LifeGroups (Growth Groups), Weekend Service, & Bridge Events

Belong to His body

- Connect Level – discipleship basics and small group community
- Reaching the dead-churched and the unmoved.
- Ministries: Membership, Disciple Groups

Be trained in truth

- Ministry Level – basic leadership training and expectations
- Moving the committed into ministry.
- Ministries: Disciplines, SERVE, Teams, Deacons/Yokemen, Women's Ministry, Training Events

Be strong in love and ministry

- Disciple Level – advanced leadership training and expectations
- Moving the trained into leadership.
- Ministries: Lead Teams, Interns, Ministry Leaders

Our Commitment

We commit to measure our success only by our ability to realize our conviction of being and making disciples. (Disciples are individuals who understand what it means to follow Jesus Christ into a life of worship, fellowship, sacrifice, service and yielding to the Spirit.) We want to see them passionately follow Jesus, selflessly love others, and intentionally make disciples. In summary, we are in the business of “changed lives”. We live to turn the uncommitted and opposed into unashamedly committed, fully devoted followers of Christ. Everything we do is measured by its usefulness, effectiveness and contribution toward this purpose.

Too often, people evaluate a church in much the same way they choose a cruise ship

CRUISE SHIP:

- Do I like the music they play in the ballroom?
- Do I like the captain and staff?
- Do I get good service and are my needs met?
- Is it pleasant and comfortable?
- Do I like the experience enough to sail with them again?

At Amite Baptist Church we believe a more appropriate metaphor for a church is a

BATTLESHIP,

and the right questions to ask are:

- Is the ship flying the right flag & fighting for a clear, noble mission?
- Does the captain understand that he and his staff serve a higher authority? Do they gladly take their orders from Him?
- Do the officers create opportunities for all crew members to be prepared & successful on their tour of duty?
- Is each individual given an opportunity to contribute in a significant way to the mission?
- Is every individual cared for, developed and honored in their efforts?

In short, as a part of the body of Christ, God calls us to be Contributors not Consumers.



Our Core Values

Biblically Based

God's Word is our guide, authority and conscience in everything. We stand firm where it stands firm and remain flexible where it is flexible. (2 Timothy 3:16)

Fully Devoted to Jesus

We measure our success by our ability to be and make disciples. Full devotion to Jesus is normal for every believer. (Luke 9:23) This includes passionately following Jesus, selflessly loving others, and intentionally making disciples.

Passionate About Prayer

We believe the attitude and action of prayer is essential to everything we do. It is critical that we regularly pray for one another. (Colossians 4:2)

Soaring in God's Grace

We acknowledge our complete dependence on the goodness and grace of God. The free grace of God is an incredible gift upon which every believer can be firmly rooted in God's unconditional love. We have benefited from the kind intention of His will; therefore, we eagerly extend it to others. (Ephesians 2:8-9)

Committed to Small Group Discipleship

Spiritual Growth requires a commitment to being intentionally involved with others in accountable, encouraging relationships. We believe life-change happens best in the context of relationships. In clusters of caring people, participants share and encourage each other toward spiritual growth. Here people can experience both the benefits of a larger church and enjoy the kind of relationships that only develop in small, safe settings. (Hebrews 10:24-25)

Authentic and Confessional in Our Walk

Authenticity, integrity, openness, confession, humility, and sincerity will define us. *"The goal of our instruction is love, from a good conscience, a pure heart, and a sincere faith."* (1 Timothy 1:5, James 5:16)

Committed to The Uncommitted

We believe that lost people matter to God; therefore, they matter to us. Jesus came to seek and save the lost and has left us here, in part, to do the same. Our individual lives and corporate efforts will reflect this conviction. (Luke 19:10) This is why the church is not about us, it is about reaching the world.

Relevant and Innovative

The Bible does not tell us to use only certain styles of music, or to present our message only through words. The Bible does make it clear, however, that we are to find ways to effectively bring the message "into all the world" to make disciples. We believe this will require prayerful scrutiny of everything we do - new practices and old - and a willingness to change when necessary within biblical parameters, in order that we, "by all possible means might save some." (1 Corinthians 9:22) We will do anything short of sin to reach people who don't know Christ.

Focused on Ministry and Service

We believe that each believer has received a special gift and should employ it in serving others, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. Spiritual giftedness and maturity determines where and how a believer serves. We believe excellence honors God and reflects His character. We strive for excellence without compromise in all areas of our ministry and lives. (1 Peter 4:10; Colossians 3:17)

Strong Families

We are committed to equipping and encouraging the men in our church to be godly husbands, fathers, and sons; women to be godly wives, mothers, and daughters; and children to be godly children and siblings. We will do our best to promote families where spiritual leadership, godly values, submission, and loving discipline are practiced in a biblical manner for the glory of God. (Eph. 5:21 - 6:4, 1 Peter 3:1-7, Colossians 3:18-21, Prov. 31:10-31, Deut. 6:4-9, Prov. 22:6 and 15, Prov. 13:24)

Our Code

Faith Filled, Big Thinking, Risk Takers

We'll never insult God with small thinking and safe living.

We are all about the "capital C" Church!

The local church is the hope of the world and we know we can accomplish infinitely more together than apart.

We give up things we love for things we love even more.

It's an honor to sacrifice for Christ and His church.

We will do anything short of sin to reach people who don't know Christ.

To reach people no one is reaching, we'll have to do things no one is doing.

We will lead the way with irrational generosity.

We truly believe it is more blessed to give than to receive.

We will laugh hard, loud, and often.

Nothing is more fun than serving God with people you love!

We always bring our best.

Excellence honors God and inspires people.

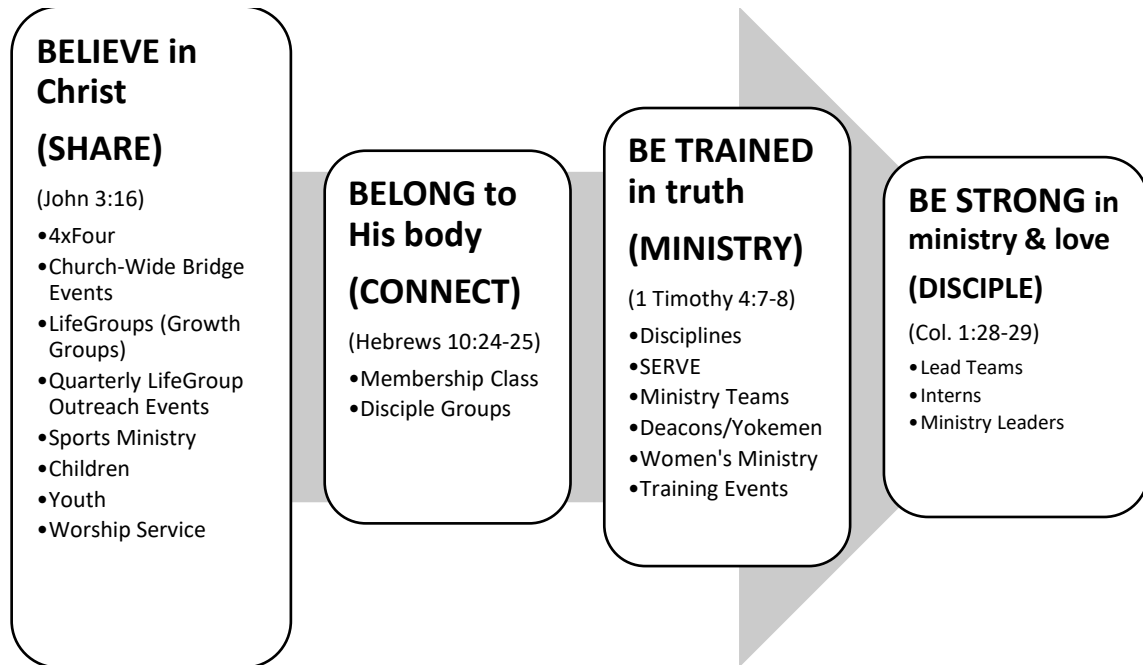
We are spiritual contributors not spiritual consumers.

The church does not exist for us. We are the church and we exist for the world.

We will honor Christ and His church with integrity.

If we live with integrity, nothing else matters. If we don't live with integrity, nothing else matters.

Our Process



Our Parts

BELIEVE in Christ (SHARE)

1. **4xFour** – Ongoing emphasis that encourages our people to identify the lost, intercede through prayer, invest in friendships, and invite them to church.
2. **Church-Wide Bridge Events** – Events designed to Help Amite Baptist Church accomplish the purpose of advancing the Kingdom of Jesus together by focusing on reaching people so that they might believe in Christ and eventually belong to the church. The goal of every Bridge Event should be to see new converts come to Christ through the teamwork of their mission and ministry. Bridge ministries exist to love, serve, and minister to the uncommitted, unchurched, de-churched, dead-churched and unmoved. These events will be planned by the community outreach team in cooperation with our LifeGroup Lead Teams. We are currently trying to do quarterly church-wide outreach events that focus on particular holidays:
 - Easter Event
 - July 4th Event (July)
 - Ultimate Destiny (October)
 - Christmas Event (December)
3. **LifeGroups** - LifeGroups are open (anyone can participate at any time), outreach minded, low level commitment, mid-sized groups (20-50 average attendance) that primarily meet on Sunday mornings (currently 9am). The focus is on reaching target people with a specific plan for connecting them with Jesus and leading them to spiritual growth and church membership. Led by a LifeGroup Lead Team (LGLT) of 6-12 members currently involved in Disciple Groups and SERVE, and approved by CLT. The Lead Team's goal is to reach, love, and serve people so that they can know Christ and be discipled. Each LifeGroup Lead Team sends one member for representation on CLT. Each LifeGroup must be approved and evaluated by CLT, have consistent meetings, use approved curriculum, and take attendance on CCB (our church database). Growth Groups (home fellowships) can be used by LifeGroups for fellowship, further Bible Study, or reaching people. The first and third Sunday evenings are often reserved for LifeGroups to use for this purpose.
4. **Quarterly LifeGroup Outreach Events** – each LifeGroup should sponsor a quarterly outreach event to love, serve, and minister to the uncommitted, unchurched, de-churched, dead-churched and unmoved. We are currently trying to get each LifeGroup to focus on a particular area or segment of our community.
5. **Sports Ministry** – the goal of these ministries should be to reach the uncommitted, unchurched, de-churched, dead-churched and unmoved. We are not currently doing this, but plan to do so in the near future, Lord willing.

- 6. **Children/Youth Ministry** – the goal of these ministries should be to attract on Sunday Morning and disciple on Wednesday Night.
- 7. **Worship Services** – the weekend service(s) will be used to share Christ with the lost, connect believers into Groups, and encourage discipleship.

BELONG to His body (CONNECT)

- 8. **Membership Class** – Helping people belong to the body. The goal of Church Membership should be to ground believers in grace, help them become committed to LifeGroups and Growth Groups, and learn how Amite can help them become full devoted followers of Christ. This is a requirement for new church membership. It will be a 4 to 6 week class that could meet on Sunday mornings or Wednesday nights. It will cover our game plan and include our cause, calling, convictions, commitments, core values, covenant, construction, conflict resolution, governance (bylaws), and doctrinal statement of Amite Baptist Church. It will also connect them with a LifeGroup, Disciple Group, and SERVE. All members will be expected to verbally agree to the church approved constitution, bylaws, and Game Plan.
- 9. **Disciple Groups** – Disciple Groups are closed (can only be joined at the beginning), discipleship minded, higher level commitment, small-sized groups (4-6) that primarily meet on Wednesday Nights 6:15-7:45. Larger groups could be formed, but still must break down into 4-6 person small groups. Groups could be youth, singles, married, family, mixed, multi-generational, etc. Groups will typically start in August and January and meet for about 12 weeks, though exceptions could be made. Disciple Groups will not be schedule for the Summer. Each group must have at least two experienced leaders who also participate in SERVE. Groups are required to go through a set curriculum for the first two years (4 semesters of 12 meetings). The goal is to equip and build the right foundation, after that the option of following sermon or approved curriculum. Disciple Groups focus on the core values of fully devoted to Christ, passionate about prayer, committed to Community, and authentic in our walk.

BE TRAINED in truth (MINISTRY)

- 10. **Disciplines** - Daily Readings, Bible Memorization, 4xFour, and personal, family, and group discussion questions.
- 11. **Ministry Teams** – people involved in serving others through various teams. Possible teams include:

Prayer	Parking	PowerPoint /	Food Preparation
First Impressions	Counseling	Media Shout	Building
Coffee	Choir	Visitation	Maintenance
Information	Praise	Community	General
Publicity	Worship Band	Outreach	Construction
Website	Drama	World Outreach	Landscaping
Graphic Design	Video	(Missions)	Office Help
Security	Sound Tech	Host Home for	
Medical	Lighting	Growth Group	
- 12. **SERVE** - Discipling new leaders for tomorrow’s harvest for Christ. The goal of the Amite Serve Team should be spiritual formation for those committed to becoming fully devoted followers of Christ. This also involves a commitment to deeper Community, biblical training, and authenticity. Must be a member of the church and in agreement with cause, calling, convictions, commitments, core values, covenant, construction, conflict resolution, governance, and doctrinal statement of Amite Baptist Church. Meets monthly for prayer, training, and coordination. All committee members, board members, Lead Team members, Deacons, and Ministry and Serve Team Leaders are required to be involved in Amite Serve Team.
- 13. **Deacons/Yokemen** – the goal of the deacon body is to serve the church and equip men for ministry.
- 14. **Women’s Ministry** –to serve the church and help equip women for ministry.
- 15. **Training Events** - TBA

BE STRONG in ministry & love (DISCIPLE)

- 16. **Lead Teams** – group of committed believers leading a LifeGroup or Ministry. (See LifeGroup)
- 17. **Interns** – individuals preparing for leadership in ministry.
- 18. **Ministry Leaders**

How important is Our Culture?

*I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all **be one**, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, **so that the world may believe that you have sent me**. The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may **be one** even as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become **perfectly one**, **so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me**.*

- Jesus' prayer for us in John 17:20-23

*A new commandment I give to you, that you **love one another**: just as I have loved you, you also are to **love one another**. By this **all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another**.*

- Jesus in John 13:34-35

*I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to **walk in a manner worthy of the calling** to which you have been called, with all **humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace**.*

- Paul in Ephesians 4:1-3



*But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have **fellowship with one another**, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.*

- 1 John 1:7

*From the same mouth come **blessing and cursing**. My brothers, these things **ought not to be** so.*

- James 3:10 ESV

*Salt is good, but if the salt has lost its saltiness, how will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and **be at peace with one another**.*

- Jesus in Mark 9:50 ESV

*Who is wise and understanding among you? By his **good conduct** let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice. But the wisdom from above is first **pure**, then **peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere**. And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.*

- James 3:13-18 ESV

*I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you **agree**, and that there be **no divisions** among you, but that you **be united** in the same mind and the same judgment.*

- Paul in 1 Corinthians 1:10 ESV

Disciple Groups

Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

- Philippians 3:12-14 ESV

In a world of loneliness, pain, and daily challenges, life can be extremely hard. And in fact, being a "Christian" can make it even harder. The good news is we were never meant to carry life's burdens or even celebrate its joys alone. God gave us Community. You don't have to do life alone. In fact, if you think you are surviving just fine without Community, you could be thriving beyond belief with it. We are created for biblical Community, called to it and changed by it.

1. We were created for Discipleship in Small Groups.

Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up! Again, if two lie together, they keep warm, but how can one keep warm alone? And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him—a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

- Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 ESV

2. God has called us to Disciple each other.

And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

- Hebrews 10:24-25 ESV

Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

- Galatians 6:2 ESV

Whoever isolates himself seeks his own desire; he breaks out against all sound judgment.

- Proverbs 18:1 ESV

3. We are changed by Discipling Each Other.

It is one of the most effective ways for a believer at any point in his/her spiritual journey to grow closer to Christ.

Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another.

- Proverbs 27:17 ESV

Our mission for Disciple Groups is to connect people in authentic relationships that lead to spiritual transformation. We believe that life-change happens best in the context of relationships, and Disciple Groups play a vital role to helping these relationships flourish in the life of the church. In small groups - we are known, loved, cared for, pursued, encouraged, and challenged to be more like Christ.

This is part of our vision to advance the kingdom of Jesus in me, my family, and the world.

Disciple Group Values

1. Devote ourselves daily to a personal relationship with Jesus. (*Ask: Am I devoting myself daily to a personal relationship with Jesus and a Spirit-led life?*) **John 15:5** - "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing."

2. Pursue deep relationships with one another, based on love and acceptance. (*Ask: Am I intentionally pursuing members in my Growth Group with a devoted, brotherly, and honorable love?*) **Romans 12:10** - "Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor."

3. Offer and receive biblical counsel in all areas of life. (*Ask: Am I offering and receiving counsel informed by the Scriptures, or am I just leaning on opinions and popular culture?*)

2 Timothy 3:16,17 – "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."

4. Live authentically, sharing our struggles. (*Ask: Am I being authentic with my group members and allowing them to not only celebrate my joys, but also pray for me in my struggles?*) **James 5:16** - "Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much."

5. Encourage one another faithfully towards maturity. (*Ask: Am I being faithful to encourage and admonish my group members towards maturity in Christ?*) **Colossians 3:16** - "Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God."

6. Engage intentionally with our communities and the world to make disciples. (*Ask: Am I engaging intentionally in my neighborhood, office, and around the world in sharing the hope of Christ within me?*) **Matthew 28:19–20** - "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Two-word summaries of the Disciple Group core values:

1. *Devote Daily* - (John 15:5)
2. *Pursue Relationally* - (Romans 12:10)
3. *Counsel Biblically* - (2 Timothy 3:16, 17)
4. *Live Authentically* - (James 5:16)
5. *Admonish Faithfully* - (Colossians 3:16)
6. *Engage Missionally* - (Matthew 28:19-20)

We resolve to do these things so that we can advance the kingdom of Jesus in me, in my family, and in the world.

Disciple Group Starting Curriculum

First Base (1st Semester)

Community Core Values

1. Biblical Community
2. Devote Daily
3. Pursue Relationally
4. Counsel Biblically
5. Live Authentically
6. Admonish Faithfully
7. Engage Missionally
8. Aligning Expectations

Identity in Christ

9. Who Am I?
10. Living as a New Creation
11. A Love That Sacrifices
12. Celebration

Second Base (2nd Semester)

Forgiveness

1. Forgiveness and Reconciliation
2. Forgiveness: Giving God Justice
3. Misunderstanding Biblical Forgiveness
4. Reasons Christians Forgive
5. How Do I Forgive?

RESOLVE Conflict Resolution

6. Conflict: It's not what you think!
7. Conflict: A Constant Opportunity
8. Conflict: Get the Log Out of Your Own Eye
9. What is the Most Loving Thing to Do?
10. Go and Show Your Brother His Fault
11. Be Prepared for Unreasonable People
12. Celebration

Third Base (3rd Semester)

Essentials of Faith

1. The Gospel
2. The Church
3. God's Word
4. Prayer
5. God's gifts
6. Telling Your Story

Purity

7. Purity & Freedom
8. Redeemed
9. The Age-Old Lie
10. A Life of Purity
11. TBA
12. Celebration

Home Plate (4th Semester)

Marriage & Singleness (Teens = Dating)

1. Assessment
2. Communication
3. Spiritual Intimacy
4. An UNCOMMON Challenge

Parenting (Teens = Mentoring?)

5. Parenting with Purpose
6. The World's Way vs. God's Way
7. Fulfilling Your Role
8. Battling Entitlement
9. TBA
10. TBA
11. TBA
12. Celebration

