

## The 5 Oaks

Over the years, Southgate has had five primary pillars, we call them "The 5 Oaks", that portray early church life in the New Testament. They are our example for church life today and are found in Acts 2:42....

"They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. 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 and the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved."

In these verses we find elements of all five:

WORSHIP

WORD

FELLOWSHIP

OUTREACH

PRAYER

### THE FIVE OAKS OF SOUTHGATE:

WORSHIP

WORD

FELLOWSHIP

OUTREACH

PRAYER

### WHO ARE WE AND WHERE ARE WE GOING?

#### I. PURPOSE STATEMENT

Southgate Church exists to love God and the people of our region by helping them grow closer to Jesus, to one another and to walk in the fullness of their God ordained gifts. We believe the 'Great Commandment' (Mt 22:36-40) and the 'Great Commission' (Mt 28:18) embody the over-arching call to God's people. We're to love the Lord our God with all our heart AND we're to proclaim His message of love and salvation to all peoples.

#### II. PURPOSE EXPANDED

The two "Greats" give us the frame work from which to work. Jesus' declaration of the 'Great Commandment' calls us to a passionate life-style of loving God and people. He says that all the other commandments, teachings and truths depend on and draw their strength from these first two admonitions! The 'Great Commission' is the natural outgrowth of the 'Great Commandment'. If we love God and love others, we will logically be involved in bringing them the good news of Jesus' redemptive work. We want to fulfill our part of the 'Great Commission'.

#### III. WHAT IS OUR PART OF THE GREAT COMMISSION?

We believe Acts 1:8 gives us a hint into fulfilling our part of the 'Great Commission'.

"...and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria and even to the remotest part of the earth."

This verse indicates marching orders for that first century church and blue print or spiritual principle for us to follow. Jerusalem was the town where they lived. Judea would be compared to the state or region and Samaria was the neighboring state. For Southgate Church, we believe our 'Jerusalem' is the South and Southwest portions of the greater St. Louis metropolitan area. Our 'Judea' seems to be other portions of the metro area and 'Samaria' could be compared to other cities within driving distance both in Missouri and Illinois.

#### IV. WHAT IS OUR STRATEGY?

##### PRAYER BASED, CELL BASED AND PLANTING CHURCHES

###### A. PRAYER BASED

God has made it abundantly clear that ours is to be a church that pursues the Lord in prayer. Intimacy and authenticity with God are among our highest priorities. The first part of Luke 24:49 and the first part of Acts 1:8 indicate another part of God's blue print or strategy for fulfilling the 'Great Commission'.

"And behold, I am sending for the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high." Luke 24:49

"...but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you..." Acts 1:8

Not only is prayer a part of the life style of every follower of Jesus, but it is one of the prescribed ways for us to pursue the power of the Holy Spirit to liberate captives, and bring 'good news' to those in need (Isa 61:1-4).

###### B. CELL BASED

It is clear that our ministry is to be largely relational and focused on helping believers become mature disciples! The 'Great Commission' says "Go make disciples... teaching them to observe all that I commanded you.."

There are over 30 'one anothers' in the New Testament. Therefore our Bible is urging us to live our lives in committed relationships with other followers of Christ! Being intentional to walk with one another requires that we prioritize meeting with one another in more ways than just the Sunday morning celebration.

"They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer." Acts 2:42

"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" (v.46)

What was the result?

"... and the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved." (v. 47)

###### C. PLANTING CHURCHES

The 'South-gate' indicates something of an opening or a pathway for others to pass through. We believe we

are uniquely positioned to plant churches utilizing the same strategies that God will give to us here in Crestwood. Church history, church anthropologists, the testimony of Scripture and our own prophetic words tell us that to fulfill our part of the 'Great Commission' we must be ready to plant churches!

#### V. WHAT DOES A 'SOUTHGATER' LOOK LIKE?

If there is a typical Southgate parishioner, we would hope they would be passionate about the 'Great Commandment'. They would be people seriously committed to the idea of loving God without reservation and selflessly loving the people in their lives. We long to be among a people that love God, His Word, one another, the lost and are devoted to prayer! To pursue that goal we have settled on five things or THE FIVE OAKS OF SOUTHGATE CHURCH to which we will be devoted.

##### A. LOVING GOD

1. WORSHIP – This involves both our celebration of God, but also a life-style of submission and trust that results in true relationship with Almighty God.
2. WORD OF GOD – We are to be transformed by the Word of God. It is how He speaks to His people.

##### B. LOVING OTHERS

1. FELLOWSHIP – We strongly desire authentic Christianity to be lived out where believers are known, cared for, held accountable and encouraged in their lives and ministries.
2. OUTREACH – This is where we reflect the heart of God to our needy world by sharing the good news of Jesus Christ and meeting real needs in our community.

C. BRIDGING THE TWO – PRAYER Here we find our desire to commune with God AND intercede for others. Meeting with God is so central to who we are individually and praying for the welfare of others is critical to their health and well-being!

We are on a journey together as God is building His Church! Southgate is one small expression of that great worldwide Body. Our hope is that you will find your place in the body and have a greater ability to express your individual gift, bear fruit for God and be built up in love. Your part matters. Your gift is important! Ephesians 4:16 teaches us we can't make it without you:

"The whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love."