



The **2020**
Vision of
Mound Evangelical
Free Church

Dear Reader,

In your hand you hold a dozen or so pages that aim to give you a glimpse into the days ahead of our church. No, we don't have a crystal ball or anything – just a vision, a 2020 Vision. We are thrilled that you might consider taking some time to get to know what we're all about. We are a most ordinary church, but we serve an extraordinary Christ. Our greatest desire is that the name and fame of Jesus increase exponentially as a result of God's work among us. If you are drawn to our 2020 Vision, we want to hear from you. Please email or call us anytime. It would be an honor to explore how we might get to know you better and partner together in this vision.

**Grace & Peace,
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INTRODUCTION

Jesus says: “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.” Mathew 28:19-20 contains what is called “The Great Commission”. The Great Commission is *the* mission for the church. It’s Jesus’ mission statement for his people for all time until he returns. So the church has a commission from King Jesus. A deputation from the Sheriff of the cosmos. An authorization from the One to whom all authority in heaven and on earth has been given. Though these words were first spoken nearly two millennia ago, the Great Commission is still relevant. This baton initially handed to 11 men in Jerusalem is now ours as a local fellowship. Here at Mound Free Church we have absolutely no intention of innovation as it relates to our basic mission as a congregation.

The mission of Mound Evangelical Free Church is *to be and make disciples of Jesus Christ.*

We love those eight words: “To be and make disciples of Jesus Christ”. You’ll notice that we do add one wrinkle to the way we state our mission that the Great Commission simply assumes. It’s the phrase: “To be”. *To be* and make disciples of Jesus Christ. We add those two words and we do so without apology because this is what Jesus takes for granted in Matthew 28:19-20. The language of the Great Commission takes it as a given that the 11 men who first received this mission to *make* disciples will themselves *be* disciples. One way Jesus makes this connection explicit is found in his summons in Mark 1:17. In this verse, Jesus says: “Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men.” Mark 1:17 isn’t just a mission statement, it’s also a philosophy of ministry – *how* the mission works. Do you want to fish for people? Follow Jesus. He will make you become a fisher of men. We serve what’s in our cupboard.

What we grow in our fields is what we load on our trucks. We can only export what we're manufacturing. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks (Luke 6:45). So our philosophy is to follow Jesus...we're confident that as we do, he'll make us become fishers of men.

Now that's just our mission. It's not our vision, though they're intimately related. Mission and vision ought always to be tightly tethered to one another. If the mission is relevant *100 years* from now, the vision is what that mission *looks like five years from now*. Our mission is to be and make disciples of Jesus Christ. If the Lord doesn't return in five years' time (though we most certainly pray that he *will*), what might our mission look half a decade from today? You may think that five years is a lot of time...but it isn't. Our lives are a vapor. They are a mist. Five years is nothing. It's the amount of time a student spends at Mound-Westonka High School (8th to 12th grade). Five years is 60 months. That's not long, friends. To be and make disciples of Jesus Christ. What's that look like for us five years from now? Here at Mound Free Church, we have a vision. A 2020 Vision. So, the mission of Mound Evangelical Free Church is to be and make disciples of Jesus Christ...therefore:

Our 2020 Vision is to glorify God as a gospel-centered church family that celebrates, demonstrates, and communicates the good news of Jesus Christ among all people by...

****Baptizing 50 new believers***

****Welcoming 40 covenant members***

****Raising up 30 reproducing leaders***

****Launching 10 community groups***

****Establishing the Harbor Center for Biblical Counseling with 5 certified counselors***

****Commissioning 2 households for global missions***

****Planting 1 church***

If we aim at nothing over next five years as a congregation we will undoubtedly hit it. If we fail to plan, we are planning to fail. Let's not set the bar of our expectations so low that we don't even trip over it. We

don't know for certain that these numbers are exactly right. The numbers ultimately are the least important aspect of this vision. It's not the perfection of the 2020 Vision that's important, but the direction of the 2020 Vision. The church of Jesus Christ is not meant to merely survive – she is to thrive. The church of Jesus Christ was not launched to become locked in hopeless, childish intramural debated with herself – but to be reconciled to one another. The church of Jesus Christ does not exist to simply stare down or worse yet *shout down* the sinful culture surrounding her – but rather to woo and win the lost in our world to our mighty Savior King. Do we have these numbers right? We have no idea. They might be too low. These goals might be too modest. Let's take a brief look at each of them.

****Baptizing 50 new believers***

If you think this is an impossible goal – you are right. We can't do this – apart from God's grace. Jesus says in John 15:5 – “Apart from me you can do nothing...”. But with Jesus...through Jesus...in union with Christ...with God – all things are possible. Philippians 4:13 says: “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” You say...50 new believers is a lot in five years. But you know what, it's not. You know what 50 new believers is? It's each of us reaching one. That's it. Each one, reach one. At Mound Free Church, each of us are encouraged to have a ‘List of 5’. That's five people we pray for on a daily basis who we believe are far from Christ. We mainly pray that God would give us opportunities to demonstrate the love of Christ to them and especially open doors to communicate the gospel of Christ to them. With the Apostle Paul, our hearts' desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved (Romans 10:1).

Now why baptism? Why not just settle for leading people to Jesus? Because Jesus commands us to baptize as the visible and tangible expression of our new birth. If you are immersed into Jesus, then you should be immersed into water. In Acts chapter 2, the church was born.

The Apostle Peter preached the first Christian sermon. Peter preached Jesus Christ and him crucified. And Luke records for us the response of his listeners. Starting in Acts 2:37 – “Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, ‘Brothers, what shall we do?’ And Peter said to them, ‘Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins’”. That day 3000 people were baptized. Can you even fathom? 3000 baby Christians added to the church in one afternoon. We’re merely hoping to lead 50 persons to Jesus and to the waters of baptism. Just 50. 50 in five years. That’s actually doable. That’s each one of us reaching one. Well, what would we do with 50 baby Christians once they’re baptized? That brings us to the next step in our 2020 Vision...

**Welcoming 40 Covenant Members*

Why covenant membership? Because love...real, biblical, Christ-like love in the church is an oath-bound commitment in relationship. Love in the local church is covenantal by its very nature. 1 John 4:7 calls us to love one another. Though this word is abused in our broader culture, in the Bible love is a bloody cross. Love is a joyful, painful, steady commitment to serve one another. Here’s how we say it in our Membership Covenant:

Having been lead, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive Jesus Christ as the Lord, Savior, and supreme Treasure of our lives, baptized as a visible and tangible expression of the gospel, and desiring to fully engage in this church’s mission to be and make disciples of Jesus Christ, we do now most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

With God’s gracious help, as fellow members of this local church zealous to manifest the work of the gospel in our lives, we will love one another with brotherly affection¹, consider others more significant than ourselves², rejoice with those who

¹ Romans 12:10

² Philippians 2:3

rejoice³, weep with those who weep⁴, be at peace with one another⁵, speak the truth to one another⁶, confess our sins to one another⁷, pray for one another⁸, instruct one another⁹, build one another up¹⁰, seek to do good to one another¹¹, outdo one another in showing honor¹², and offer hospitality to one another with a glad heart¹³.

Furthermore, as an expression of our sincere desire to support the vitality of the ministries of this fellowship, we eagerly resolve to attend weekly worship gatherings¹⁴, confirm and nourish our faith in the taking of the Lord's Supper in a worthy manner¹⁵, participate in community group life¹⁶, discover and deploy our spiritual gifts in loving service¹⁷, contribute cheerfully and sacrificially of our financial resources to the advance of the gospel through this local church¹⁸, obey our leaders and seek to hold them accountable for their leadership¹⁹, and engage in personal evangelism with those in our sphere of influence²⁰.

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen.²¹

Why would someone put their signature to and commit to living out a statement like that? With all due respect, we have a better question: if you are someone for whom Jesus bled and died...why *wouldn't* you sign a statement like that? We believe that we'll see at least 40 make such a commitment over the next five years. So clearly, for covenant membership we're not looking for spiritual kindergarteners, but rather spiritual navy seals. You might imagine that among these members will be men and women who are able to lead and train others. Which takes us to our third goal of our 2020 Vision...

³ Romans 12:15

⁴ Romans 12:15

⁵ Mark 9:50

⁶ Ephesians 4:25

⁷ James 5:16

⁸ James 5:16

⁹ Romans 15:14

¹⁰ 1 Thessalonians 5:11

¹¹ 1 Thessalonians 5:15

¹² Romans 12:10

¹³ 1 Peter 4:9

¹⁴ Hebrews 10:25

¹⁵ 1 Corinthians 11:17-34

¹⁶ Acts 2:42-47

¹⁷ 1 Peter 4:10-11

¹⁸ 2 Corinthians 8-9

¹⁹ Hebrews 13:17; Acts 17:11

²⁰ Colossians 4:2-6; 1 Peter 3:15

²¹ 2 Corinthians 13:14

**Raising Up 30 Reproducing Leaders*

In 2 Timothy 2:2, one seasoned Christian leader says to another younger Christian leader: “and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.” At Mound Free Church, God has gifted us with leaders. You know you’re a leader when you turn around and you discover that there are other people following you. You know you’re a leader when you’re first a student. A student whose voracious appetite to learn is exceeded only by your desire to share with other people what you’ve learned. You know you’re a leader when nothing would give you greater joy than to serve another person by pointing the way for them on their next step toward your Savior.

Our church is busting with leaders. Some are greener than others, but for a smaller-size church – we’re loaded with them. We’re beginning to develop a culture of leadership. A reproducing leader is a man or woman who can take another man or woman under their wing for a period of say 36 months (three years) and over that space of time you give that person *everything*. Everything you know about Jesus, everything you’re becoming through Jesus, and everything you can do to help another person grow in their likeness to Jesus. A reproducing leader is a person who by God’s grace is able to transfer their Christian convictions, their Christian character, and their Christian ministry competencies to another person who is able in turn to do that for another person. 2 Timothy 2:2 makes mention of four generations. Mentoring those who mentor others who mentor others who in turn mentor others. As this aspect of our vision gets traction, 30 reproducing leaders (15 men / 15 women) will be a distant goal in our rear view mirror. You know how exponents work. As the people our current leaders are mentoring begin to step into places of leadership, this facet of our vision will become a runaway freight train – Mound Free Church will be an unstoppable factory of disciple-making disciple-makers. So...what would we do with 50 newly baptized believers, 40 new covenant members and 30 reproducing leaders? That

delivers us to the doorstep of our fourth goal in our 2020 Vision...

****Launching 10 Community Groups***

The Bible never commands anyone anywhere to join a community group. However, we are commanded to love one another with brotherly affection (Romans 12:10). We are commanded to confess our sins to one another (James 5:16). We are commanded to pray for and with one another (James 5:16). We are commanded to offer hospitality to one another...without grumbling (1 Peter 4:9). And those are just a handful of the “one another’s” of the New Testament. Those four commands *alone* would warrant a fierce commitment to community groups in the local church. Though Scripture never explicitly directs us to sign up for a community group, let’s face it...most of our problems don’t crop up from 10:30-11:45am on Sunday mornings. 75 minutes a week is simply not enough. It’s been our experience that true biblical fellowship is not a microwave but a crock-pot situation. Our Sunday morning gatherings are essential, but they’re not enough. Therefore, we see our community group ministry as absolutely vital to the overall health of our local church. Our community groups aren’t just a program we offer, they are the shape of how we follow Jesus. We gather regularly outside the walls of our church building in one another’s homes in order to study Scripture together, pray for one another, share meals alongside each other and genuinely open our lives to one another. Launching 10 new community groups over the next five years will provide our new believers, covenant members, and reproducing leaders an important context in which to be and make disciples of Jesus Christ. Let’s take a look at our sixth goal...

****Establishing the Harbor Center for Biblical Counseling with 5 Certified Counselors***

Every local church *is* a counseling center. Whether or not a church *has* a counseling center is a matter of church culture, as well as gifting and

calling. So make no mistake, every church already *is* a counseling center. However, we believe that God is calling our church to *have* a counseling center. The Harbor Center for Biblical Counseling. As you read this, God has already drawn a handful of men and women among our number into the certification process through the Association of Certified Biblical Counselors. Five years from now, our church fellowship will maintain and oversee a non-profit, entirely church-based and community-oriented center for biblical counseling – counseling that we will offer to the city of Mound and the broader Westonka area free of charge. We believe that God is calling our church to go deep and hang in long with people through biblical, gospel-saturated, Spirit-empowered soul care. As a congregation, we are committed to sustaining, healing, reconciling and guiding sinners and saints alike using the wisdom of the Scriptures as they point to the Wonderful Counselor – Jesus Christ. It is our rock-solid conviction that the gospel offers the comprehensive rescue, regardless of the nature of our struggle. We believe the Bible is sufficient to address matters ranging from suffering to depression, from anxiety to addiction and much more. Some of us will lead this ministry. All of us will lay hold of and benefit from this ministry. We hope to lead scores, perhaps hundreds to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ through this ministry.

From where will our 50 new believers come? Maybe through the Harbor Center for Biblical Counseling alone. Now for a look at our sixth goal in our 2020 Vision...

****Commissioning 2 Households for Global Missions***

Revelation 5:9 reminds us that Jesus has eyes for the nations. Yes, Jesus loves us but he also loves the Native American population here in the U.S., not to mention the precious people of Macedonia, Russia, England, Bulgaria, and Japan. By God's mercy, it is our privilege to support missionary families among each of these peoples. As it relates to global missions, our first commitment is to continue to strengthen our service to these families – supplying their need through prayer, financial

resources, and encouraging fellowship. Over the last decade, the Lord has been pleased to send out two of these families from our own fellowship for global missions. God has done this before, and we believe he has plans to do it again. Our hope is that he would do it twice over as we commission two households for global missions. With thousands of people groups worldwide yet unreached and unengaged by the gospel of Jesus Christ, we would love to send two households toward these important regions. Though it will be a stretch, we believe it pleases the Lord that we pray and work in this direction. We desire to be the sending, home-church to two new missionary households over the next five years.

Now, there's one goal left in our 2020 Vision – and it's an exciting one...

****Planting 1 Church***

By God's mercy, our church is now in her early 70's (we were planted in 1944). For over 70 years, our fellowship has carried the gospel to the people of the Westonka area and beyond. But in all that time, there is one thing we've never done. We've never become a parent. We've never given birth to a baby church, but by the year 2020 that's precisely what we plan to do. With 50 new believers, 40 covenant members, 30 reproducing leaders, 10 new community groups, a burgeoning biblical counseling ministry, and greater reach into the global mission field, we'll have the D.N.A. and the spiritual health to give birth to another congregation. Though it's just a dream right now, it won't be for long. In time, we'll see how the Lord will move among us in order to accomplish this goal. With 80% of the churches in our nation plateaued or declining in growth, and a new unprecedented era of secularism on the rise, healthy churches that multiply are the exception rather than the rule. We want to be part of the exception. Is God calling you to be a part of something new for the glory of Christ in the Twin Cities metro? If so, we invite you to consider joining us in our mission and vision for the advance of the fame of the name of Jesus.

How Can I Be a Part of This?

****Pray for and pursue your 'List of 5' with abandon***

If you don't have a 'List of 5', visit our information table in Fellowship Hall or download one from our website at www.moundfree.org . Get on your knees for your list of five. Move your feet toward your list of five. Open your mouth to your list of five. Each one, reach one.

****Attend our monthly 2020 Prayer Meeting***

Puritan missionary John Eliot said: "Prayer and pains through faith in Jesus Christ will accomplish anything." We believe that. Yes we need to plant seeds with our witness, but we also must water those seeds with our prayers. We pray best together. Come to the sanctuary on the first Wednesday of every month at 6:30pm to gather with and pray alongside others from our fellowship committed to the 2020 Vision. We'll storm heaven's door for your 'List of 5' as well as for each step in the 2020 Vision. See you there!

****Ask the Lord about your next step in our vision***

Picture these seven goals moving from left to right on a continuum. Ask yourself: "What's my next step further in (to one of these goals)?" and "What's my next step further along (toward one of these goals)?"

The MEFC 2020 Vision

*In many English translations, Proverbs 29:18 says something along these lines: “Where there is no vision, the people perish...”. This passage is often marshalled by well-intended Christian leaders to point to the importance of casting a compelling vision statement for the local church. While this is certainly a vital aspect of organizational leadership, Proverbs 29:18 has precious little to do with casting 21st century vision statements. The ESV captures the nuance of this verse aptly with its translation: “Where there is no prophetic vision the people cast off restraint...”. Clearly the verse, then, is about the importance of divine revelation for the life, health, and encouragement of God’s people. Nevertheless, vision (in our sense of the word) is absolutely critical for us. Proverbs refers to this as “planning”. The following Bible study is designed as a companion to our **2020 Vision**. Take some time on your own, with your family, or in your community group to work through these questions and see just how essential vision (i.e. “plans”) is to the mission God has given us.*

Getting Started

1. An old adage says ‘if you fail to plan you’re planning to fail’. Another way of saying this is that ‘if we aim at nothing as a congregation we will undoubtedly hit it’. What do you think? Agree or disagree? Why?

Digging Deeper

2. What do you believe are the benefits of our church pursuing this five-year plan (our 2020 Vision)? What are the costs? Can you think of any cautions? Discuss these things as a group.

Open Your Bible to Proverbs 16:1...

3. The first thing the Book of Proverbs would want to point out to us as a congregation is that God is the one who is absolutely sovereign over our plans (i.e. our 2020 Vision). Take some time to read through the following verses: Proverbs 16:1, 9, 33; 19:21; 20:24. From the steps of our feet to the roll of the dice, the Bible teaches that God is sovereign over it all. How does that make you feel? How ought these truths both comfort and counsel us as we chase our vision?

4. Proverbs also repeatedly reminds us that we ought to enlist wise counselors to help us plan. Read through the following scriptures: Proverbs 11:4; 12:5; 12:20a; 14:22a; 15:22; 20:18; 24:6). The careful development of the 2020 Vision at Mound Free Church has included contributions from your current pastors and elders, former beloved leaders, and even the leadership of the North Central District of the EFCA. How does *this* make you feel?

Not only was this vision developed with the careful input of wise leaders, it was also realized through much *patience*. What does Proverbs say about the importance of not planning in haste? Discuss the following verses: Proverbs 6:16a, 18b; 21:5b; 24:27.

5. At a couple of key points, Proverbs urges us to *pray* about our plans. Read Proverbs 3:5-6 and 16:3. The MEFC 2020 Vision has been the subject of deliberate and focused prayer over the course of many months (even years) among your leaders. Look back at our seven goals in

the 2020 Vision. How many of these would benefit from our earnest and faith-filled prayers as a congregation over the next five years? Will you commit personally to praying for this vision?

6. Proverbs clearly would have some cautions for us as we plan and cast this vision. Perhaps it goes without saying, but whatever else we plan to do – we must never plan to sin. Take a look at Proverbs 6:16a and 18a. Just to be clear these verses say: “...the LORD hates...a heart that devises wicked plans...”. This is serious business. While our 2020 Vision is certainly made up of holy desires prompted by good and godly motives, it is also true that even righteous desires can become wicked ones. For example, the 2020 Vision could become an idol that replaces the Lord himself. You know you have an idol on your hands when you want something so bad you’ll sin or in order to get it, or sin if you don’t get it. Though perhaps it sounds far-fetched, how might we be tempted to sin in order to accomplish our 2020 Vision? On the other hand, how might we be tempted to sin if we *don’t* realize our vision?

7. Maybe especially for 21st Americans more than most, God’s word entreats us to be humble about our plans. Proverbs 27:1 says: “Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring.” What sorts of potential stumbling blocks for pride does the 2020 Vision present our congregation? How can we guard ourselves against such temptations? (*Hint*: If you’d like some help, see question #3).

8. Finally, Proverbs also addresses the key role that good old fashioned follow-through plays in planning. Read Proverbs 21:5a and 24:10. It’s the plans of the *diligent* after all that lead to abundance (not the quitter, the lazy or the lethargic). Why are these virtues (determination, fortitude, etc.) as important as any as we pursue our 2020 Vision?

Bonus Question: On a scale of 1 to 10 how *pumped* are you about MEFC’s 2020 Vision? Why?