

Why We Do What We Do

We don't expect every church to do church the way we do it. Every church needs to do what they feel God is showing them to do. Below is a snapshot of what we feel God has shown us to do:

Love

God is love. God created us from love, of love and for love. Our existence makes no sense apart from God's love. The Bible says we can have all faith, spiritual gifts and even good works, but if we don't do them out of love, we are nothing. Therefore, everything we do must be done from love.

Worship

God promises that he will "inhabit" the praises of his people, (Psalm 22:3), and His presence always brings the miraculous. Therefore we begin each Celebration Service with praise, expecting God's presence to fill the place. The Bible says that we are to, ***"Come before His presence with singing... enter into His gates with thanksgiving and into his courts with praise, be thankful to Him and bless His name."*** (Psalm 104:2, 4)

You will see many expressions of praise at the Gathering Place. You may see people expressing their love for God by raising their hands, some clapping, shouting, kneeling, sitting, standing, and some even dancing. All of these are Biblical forms of worship (Psalm 150). But the most important thing about worship, no matter what your outward expression, is that you are doing it from your heart. That is what God is after.

The Bible

We believe the Word of God is life and power! We don't see the Bible as a boring history book, or words written by human inspiration, but rather a letter from heaven that is full limitless possibility. Paul, the apostle, wrote, ***"For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe."*** 1 Thessalonians 2:13

Hebrews 4:11 says, ***"For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword..."*** and Jesus said, ***"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God."*** Matthew 4:4

Therefore, whether it's in our Celebration Services, our Connect Groups, our retreats, seminars or prayer meetings, you will almost always hear the Word of God.

The Holy Spirit

We honor the Holy Spirit. He is the third Person of the God-Head. Jesus spoke very highly of the Holy Spirit. In **John 16: 13, 14** Jesus said, ***"However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all the truth, for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak. And He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you."***

The Holy Spirit not only teaches us, guides us and reveals Jesus to us, He also moves in supernatural power. In **1 Corinthians chapters 12 and 14**, the Bible lists many of the "gifts of the Spirit". These include miracles, prophecy, healing, tongues, interpretation of tongues, faith, among other gifts. We believe the use of these gifts are an important part of our worship services because they empower God's people and honor the Holy Spirit.

But, the Bible also says these gifts are to be done ***“decently and in order”***. (1 Corinthians 14:40), and that, ***“God is not the author of confusion but of peace...”*** (1 Corinthians 14:33) Therefore the services are led by Pastors and Elders who help facilitate the gifts of the Spirit, as well as our Connect Group leaders who facilitate the gifts in our small groups.

You can refer to the “Gifts of the Holy Spirit” document at the Resource Center as well as listen to the sermon, “Body Building” on the web at www.GatheringPlaceChurch.org, to find out more about how we operate in the gifts of the Spirit during one of our worship services.

Youth

We believe in the next generation! That’s why you will see children and youth worshipping with us in our time of praise at the beginning of each service, as well as praying for the sick in our prayer lines. Young people want to know God and be used by God in powerful ways, so we like to create opportunities for them to be a part of releasing “heaven on earth”!

Community

We believe in Genuine Christian Community. The Bible calls it “koinania” which means to be “cemented to the Lord Jesus and to one another.” Everyone wants quality friendships - the kind that last a lifetime. We believe this is why God created us, to have a friendship with Him, and created the Church so we could have friendship with one another.

Psalm 25:14 Message says, ***“God-friendship is for God-worshipers, they are the ones He confides in.”*** And Jesus said in **John 15:12-14**, ***“This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one that this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends. You are my friends if you do whatever I command you.”***

John, one of Jesus’ first disciples, put it like this, ***“By this we know love, because He laid down his life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for one another.”*** 1 John 3:16

You will hear a lot about Connect Groups on Sunday mornings. The reason for this is because we know the main place you will find these kinds of friendships is in a Connect Group. Sunday mornings are a time for corporate worship and teaching, but our small groups are for intimate discussion and application. You will find yourself growing fast and making new friends as you connect with others and the Word of God in our small groups.

Evangelism and Missions

We are unashamed of the message of Christ because the Bible says, ***“... it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes...”*** Romans 1:16

We believe in “sharing” and “showing” the gospel. In almost every service you will hear a presentation of the gospel given with an opportunity to receive Jesus Christ as Savior. But we believe in more than just “sharing” the Good News, we also believe in “showing” it. On any given Sunday you might hear how we are feeding the poor, clothing the naked, digging water wells, building churches, healing the sick, conducting eyeglass clinics, teaching AIDS clinics, supporting missionaries who are reaching the poor needy, as well as hearing how you can get involved.

Jesus clearly said, ***“Inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to me.”*** Matthew 25:40

There is much more to GPC than what we’ve listed here, but this will give you a good feel for who we are and what we do. We hope you find our faith family a good fit for you and your family as we continue to expand His kingdom together.