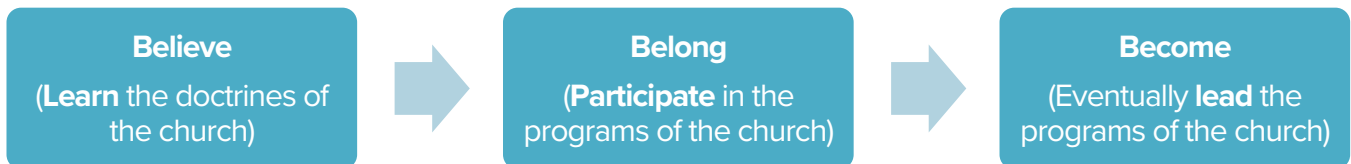


What is Praise & Worship working to become?

Praise & Worship will be a Christ-focused body of believers; making disciples and sharing the Good News of Jesus with all of southwest Missouri and beyond. As part of His family, we will continually reach out to the lost. We will warmly invite all to belong and help everyone learn His story. We will strive to share the experience of His love and power and embody His promises in every aspect of our daily lives.

What is the process for this?

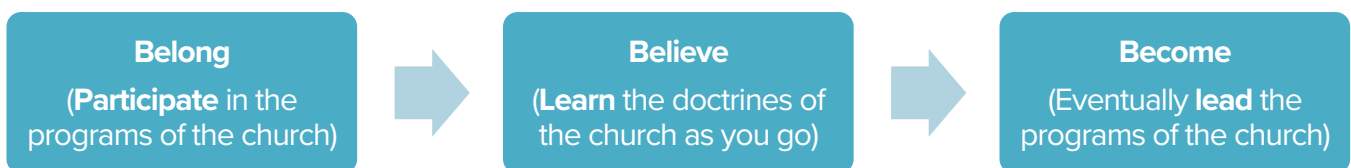
In the 20th Century Church in America, a common approach is through “church growth”. In this mindset, the goal is to grow Sunday Morning attendance by “attractational programs”, thereby gaining members through a manner like this:



On the surface, this might sound like a fine approach. And quite frankly, it is likely the way most of us were brought into the Body of Christ! But this approach can unintentionally generate some strange and non-Biblical realities:

1. It assumes the highest value for the church to be “doctrine”.
2. It invariably causes the “workflow” or “function” of the church to be the programs themselves.
3. It limits the creativity and capabilities of people who wish to serve others.

To resolve these challenges, a more recent approach to church membership and process has looked more like this:



Note how this is better in being more welcoming! But the function of the church remains the same and leadership still remains confined to the process.

1. Programs are still the “machine” which drives the organization.
2. People are still servants of the organization rather than the other way around.

The question becomes: How do we “do” church in a way that is less reflective of a “non-profit organization” and more reflective of a BODY? Or, perhaps more familiar to us and also Biblically accurate: a FAMILY. (Remember: You don’t “go to church”, you ARE THE CHURCH!)

Members of the Body, Partners in the Gospel

As followers of Jesus, as members of His body, we live life within tension! **Tensions of rest and work, comfort and challenge, staying and going, receiving and being poured out.**

Perhaps this is why Scripture speaks of “members of the body” and “partners in the Gospel.”

This creates a framework that matches the family, the household, rather than the kinds of thinking we have for corporate organizations.

Family members do not advance by way of programs, they are members of the family simply because of **who they are**.

Family members don’t have as many “doctrines” as they have stories. And there is never a time when we “graduate” from telling stories. Our knowledge of the stories is not merely cognitive, it is lived as a cycle of seasons all within the rhythm of life. Families don’t just tell stories, we teach by doing. Everything is based upon love! We demonstrate. We mentor. We grow together.

Furthermore, we then embody the truths of the story, the experiences we have together, in the world whatever we do, wherever we go. We are loved by Jesus and together we are joining Him in His mission.

1. Everything we do places JESUS at our center and His Word by His Spirit as the power for accomplishing His mission.
2. Because we are loved by Jesus, we are then set free to love one another. This requires the organization to serve people!

I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. —
Philippians 1:3-6

