



VISION 2020

“Connecting Deeply”

Romans 12:5
February 1, 2015

THE CHALLENGE: A Renewed Vision - Transformation
We desire to be radically transformed by God into a people He can use to transform others.

The CRITERIA

- ✓ **Connect** Yourself & Others to Christ and the Church

THE CALL – A DNA Shift

- ✓ A Call to Connect Deeply



WHY THE CALL TO CONNECT DEEPLY?

A Church Family...

- ✓ **Identifies You as A Genuine Follower of Christ**
You Choose to Belong
- ✓ **Moves You Out of Self-Centered Isolation**
You Choose to Share
- ✓ **Reminds Us of Our Need for Each Other**
You Choose to Sacrifice
- ✓ **Helps You Develop Our Spiritual Muscles**
You Choose to Strengthen (Grow)
- ✓ **Will Help Keep Us From Backsliding**
You Choose to Show (Love)
- ✓ **Gives You the Opportunity to Share in Christ’s Mission in This World**
You Choose to Seize (the Moments)

MINISTRIES ALIGNED

- ✓ Worship Services/1st Super Sunday Nights /Family Suppers
- ✓ Special Events: Kidz Extreme / Trunk or Treat / Tailgating / Relay for Life & Others
- ✓ Class 101 – Starting Point

TARGETS TO LOOK TOWARDS

- ✓ We want to see a 75% over-all average attendance of our Resident Membership in Worship. Currently at 58%
- ✓ By 2017 with a 15% Growth Each Year would allow us to move to 2 Worship Services
- ✓ Establish a clearly defined process to move people from the “parking lot” to a deeply connected member.
- ✓ Create An Atmosphere of Prayerful Dependence
- ✓ Full-Time Worship Leader – 2020

TEAMS TO CONNECT WITH

- ✓ Creative Worship Team (Help plan Message Series Themes, Décor, New Message Series)
- ✓ Technical Team (Sound, Lights, Video)
- ✓ Parking Lot & Door Greeters – Front Door Team
- ✓ Welcome Team – Middle Door
- ✓ Follow Up Team – Back Door
- ✓ Prayer Team
- ✓ Starting Point Team

OUR CONTRIBUTION & COMMITMENT

Take the Next Step for The Sake of the Call

- ✓ Commit to Praying Every Day for Vision 2020
- ✓ Identify and Take the Next Step Up in Each of the 4 Areas (Connect / Grow / Commit / Go)
- ✓ Take the Next Step Up and Commit to Serve on One of the 4 Teams: Connect / Grow / Commit / Go Teams
- ✓ Take Your Next Step Up on the Generosity Ladder
First Time ➔ Occasional ➔ Intentional ➔ Tithing ➔ Extravagant

VISION 2020

“Connecting Deeply”

Romans 12:5 & Acts 2:42-47

February 1, 2015 AM Service

The Challenge – A Renewed Vision – Transformation

We desire to be radically transformed by God into a people He can use to transform others.

It firsts start with our transformation in every area of our lives. This is the prerequisite and the requirement before we can do anything.

Once we allow the Lord to do this transformational work in our lives then the Lord can begin to use us to be a conduit, a vehicle through which He can move in the lives of people so their lives transformed as well!

The Criteria

- ✓ **Connect Yourself & Others to Christ and the Church**
- ✓ **Grow** In a Deeping Relationship with Christ
- ✓ **Commit** Your Time and Resources to Serve Christ & Others
- ✓ **Go** Share the Love of Christ With Everyone Everywhere
- ✓ **Resources**
- ✓ **Praying for leaders for each of these teams**

The Call – A DNA Shift

- ✓ **A Call to Connect Deeply**
- ✓ A Call To Grow Deeper
- ✓ A Call to Commit Sacrificially
- ✓ A Call to Multiply Rapidly

The Chart – A Transformation Journey

It's a process – it designates movement – We are never called to stand still – we are called to mature, to grow in our walk and as we do that we share the love of Christ with others and then help them walk that same path.

CONNECT

1st Part - Connecting Yourself – 1st question out of the gate – are you connected? Stages of where people are today

- ✓ Guest 1st or 2nd time today
- ✓ Attender – you come fairly often – several months perhaps

- ✓ Regular Attender – you come regularly for months or more (All of these you may be believer, a Christ Follower or maybe not – your membership is somewhere else.
- ✓ You’ve asked Christ into your heart, but never made it public and never joined this church or any other church.
- ✓ Member – you have joined – not connected beyond that nor helping anyone else get connected
- ✓ LifeGroup Member – you come when you can, not really that committed
- ✓ Deeply Connected LifeGroup Member – you are committed to being here and a vital role of seeing it grow and multiply. Helping others to get deeply connecte

2nd Part - Connecting Others to Christ and then the Church

This is where we overflow with the GO part a little – but we see Vision 2020 as a critical challenge for every member of this church to see the clear call of God on their lives to help connect others to Christ and to the Church. That’s not just the preacher’s call, the deacon’s call, the LifeGroup Leader’s call, but everyone who is a part of this Faith Family. We must be about connecting with people both inside the Church and outside the Church. It’s about being intentional (See Core Values)

I want you to identify where you are in each part and where you need to be.

Why Such a Big Deal About Connecting? Our Prayer is that you would become captivated by Christ and the Church. Why?

There are some of you who are but there are so many Christians today who are not captivated but simply amused or entertained by it, content to look at it from a distance – unwilling to get too close, take from it and not give back, willing to attend but don’t ask me to go any further – too busy, don’t need it, too early, too late, can’t make it, don’t care and the list goes on.

“Sadly many Christian use the church, but don’t love it” Rick Warren We wonder why we have a hard time convincing lost people to come to Christ and join a church when so many who claim the name of Christ are simply a member and nothing more, they have their name on the roll.

Preacher, why do you make such a big deal about church – and what is the big deal about our LifeGrous? I am so glad you asked that question.

Thrilled beyond belief that you would ask! I thought you would never ask. Let me give you the main idea and quite frankly the most important thing that you will hear this morning! Why be captivated by the church? Because Jesus is! He was so captivated by it that He did for it and do you know who that it is – me & you, the church of Jesus Christ right here at Petal FBC & around the world! Listen to what Jesus said about the church & Paul telling of Christ’s great love for the church!

“I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not overpower it.”

Matthew 16:18 & “...Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her.” Ephesians 5:25 See Also Matthew 12:46-50

Our Church Family is designed to be of great importance to us today. Why? Because the Lord told us so. And again, not just to be a member, but connected – deeply to each other in Christ. Let’s look at the reasons and the benefits of being a part of a church family and why it is specifically important right here at Petal FBC. Notice with each of these that there is a step that we must make, an active choice and decision as you move deeper into being connected with the body of Christ. The truth is that closer we become to Christ, the more captivated we become with Him, the more we will be captivated by what He loves, and He loves the church, therefore we should be captivated by His Church.

✓ **A Church Family Identifies You as A Genuine Follower of Christ**

You Choose to Belong You step over the line, you are no longer an attender, but a member. You are willing to commit your life to this church – which means to the other members of this church. You enter into a covenant with Jesus Christ and with each other – I belong to you and you belong to me. A lot of people say, “Well, I’m going to go to church,” as if church is a place you go to. It is not a building; it is not an institution; it is not an organization; it is not a club. It is a family. Church is not a place you go to. Church is a family you belong to. The Christian life is not just a matter of **believing**. **It is matter of belonging, and you and I must choose to belong**. God wants you to identify to make the choice to be a part of His family. You know, you hear some people say, “Well, I’m a Christian, but I don't want to belong to any church.” That just doesn't make sense. The church is where you live out what it means to be a Christian. That's like saying, “I’m a football player, but I don't want to be

a part of any team.” It doesn't work. “I'm a tuba player, but I don't want to be a part of an orchestra.” A tuba player without an orchestra sounds pretty funny. “I'm a bee, but I don't want to be a part of a hive”; a soldier without a platoon. A Christian without a church family is an orphan. God meant us to be a part of a family – He never intended for us to be alone – Garden of Eden. We step over the line – identify through baptism or joining this church family. As part of our Vision 2020 and connecting, we will require people to go through Starting Point – Class 1010 and then sign a covenant – what it means to be a part of Petal FBC. Membership isn't cheap but it has its privileges. We want to step up what it means to be a part of Petal FBC!! There is commitment and sacrifice required!

✓ **A Church Family Moves You Out of Self-Centered Isolation**

You Choose to Share

By nature we are all selfish people, we want our own way, want our needs met, want to be comfortable and happy with what we want, when we want, how we want it, and have only those people who make us happy around us. We are just simply selfish – yet being in a church family helps us to share with each other to be willing to help each other, even if it means that I do without, or I don't get my way, or I am not in that particular group, or don't get my say. We choose to share our lives as well. Remember what Paul told the Thessalonian church, “**We were delighted to share with you not only the gospel, but our lives as well because you have become so dear to us.**” 1 Thessalonians 2:8 You need fellowship (*Fellowship is learning to love other people in God's family.*) and you can't fellowship with 350 people. You can only fellowship with six to ten. That's why it's so important and why we emphasize we want everybody in a small group. You need a small group for the relationships. You don't get relationships in a crowd. You can worship in a crowd but you can only fellowship in a small group. That is what made the early church so successful in Acts 2. **Romans 12:5 “Christ makes us one body and individuals who are connected to each other” (GWT)** Being a member also gives you that solid foundation on which to stand so when those earthquakes come in your life – you are connected – & you have something & someone who will be there to help you! We can share our experiences, our time together, and our problems.

✓ **A Church Family Reminds Us of Our Need for Each Other**

You Choose to Sacrifice The Bible is filled with the fact that you and I are to work with one another in getting this job done. There are **58 times** in the New Testament the Bible says it with a one another statement.

We serve one another. We love one another. We pray with one another, sacrifice for one another, be honest, give to, be honest, confess to one another and the list goes on and on. We need each other whether we think we do or not. The Bible even says we have to put up with one another when we're doing all of this. That's how it works together. This is love in action. Not just in words. We have to choose to sacrifice and put the other person first! Remember the simply JOY – Jesus, Others, You. We are willing to do our part in connecting and serving His church – which means to those people right here at Peta FBC! God did not bring you to here to sit and soak in some spiritual spa. That's not why you're here. He brought you here to serve. He wants to make a difference through your life. In every family there are family responsibilities. You divide up the chores, being part of that family, every one of us has a part.

✓ **A Church Family Helps You Develop Spiritual Muscles**

You Choose to Strengthen (Grow) We are strengthened and encouraged in our personal walks with the Lord when we share our lives together. We are encouraged and inspired by other's testimony and walk. We hear how they have struggled and made it through and it helps us. I must work out my faith privately ([Phil. 2:15](#)) but we also do it together in community. Our faith can strengthen someone else's and we can do the same for someone else. We grow stronger together than we ever will apart and you must do that in small group – you must be known. We must not be afraid or embarrassed to share our lives with each other, but instead know that it will strengthen us and help us to grow!

✓ **A Church Family Will Help You Keep From Backsliding**

You Choose to Show (Love) It is hard to backslide very far when we are connected! We must love one another and many times we do that is tough love – we love someone enough to go and get them, to speak the truth in love and encourage them to get back on the narrow road. [Romans 12:10](#), "*Be devoted to each other like a loving family.*" We have all been there, not been where we needed to be and aren't you grateful for those people in your lives who came to you and loved you enough to help you

get back on track! That is love, not hate. That is what a family is about. When my children get off track, I don't ignore them, pretend they didn't, hope they figure it out on their own, I show my love to them by helping them get back on the path. This happens best in small groups – where we know each other & are known! *“Your strong love for each other will prove to the world that you are my disciples.”*

✓ **A Church Family Gives You the Opportunity to Share in Christ's Mission in This World You Choose to Seize (the Moments)**

We must certainly do our part as individuals to be sharing Christ wherever we go and wherever we are, but we cannot do it by ourselves very well. We will only impact a few people. When we are part of God's family, then we choose to seize those moments and together impact our community through special events, outreach, door to door, mission trips, things we could never accomplish by ourselves. We must be a part of a church family in order to make the greatest impact possible. We must choose to seize these moments.

Friends, this is what life is all about, **loving God and learning to love each other**. If you miss this, you have missed the purpose of your life and I pity you. Because life is not about accomplishments. It is about relationships. You were put on this earth to know God and love Him, and to know His family and love them, because that's whom we're spending eternity with. As a pastor, I have been at the bedside of many people as they were dying. I couldn't count how many bedsides I have been at. In all of those situations where I've been there at the side as people were taking their last breath, I have never once had anybody say, “Bring me my diplomas. I want them close to me.” “Bring me my trophies.” “Bring me the gold watch I got at retirement.” “Bring me my I Phone, my computer, my facebook.” It is in those final moments they talk about what matters most, and they say, “Bring me my family and friends.” One day, one day you're going to figure out that what really matters in life is knowing God and having close family and friends. I hope it doesn't take that long. I hope you don't discover that at the last moment of your life

You see, what we want Petal FBC to be known for is not our size, not our sermons, not our singing, not our strategy, not our buildings, but our love. We want people to say, “That's the place where they love each other,”

because that's what Christianity is all about, loving God and loving each other. When people find a church, a place, where there is genuine love, you'd have to lock the doors to keep people away, because people are not looking for religion, they are looking for a family. And once here they find the love they are really looking for – the love of Jesus Christ that will radically change their lives! We connect them to the Gospel!

How do you know if you're in God's family? How do you know personally? Let me read you three verses that will test if you're really a Christian or not.

1 John 3:10, "Anyone who does not love other Christians does not belong to God." 1 John 4:20, "Those who do not love their brothers and sisters, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have never seen."

1 John 3:14, "But if we love our Christian brothers, it proves that we have passed from death to eternal life." That's the proof.

The greatest privilege you will ever be offered in life is a privilege of being a part of God's family. So let me ask you a couple relevant questions: which of these levels of fellowship are you at? Have you even made it to the first one, choosing to belong? Are you still floating around from church to church or attending and never joining? You've never gotten committed. You've never gotten into membership. You need to choose a church. You need to be baptized and say, "I'm not ashamed." That's the most basic level. If you haven't done that, that's your next step.

Then you need to learn to share. And where do you do that? In a small group. You don't learn to share in a place like this. Then you need to not just share your heart, you need to do your part. That's partnership. Find your niche. Find your place to give back, to make a contribution. If you're in the family of God, you have some family responsibilities. God expects you to do your part in the family. You don't just slide along while everybody else does theirs.

Then you move to this deepest level. Are there any other believers that know you are devoted to them? That you're going to be there for them in their crisis? Even more basic question is, are you a part of the family of God? You say, "Well, isn't everybody a part of the family of God?" No.

Everybody is created by God, but not everybody is a child of God. You have to choose to be a part of God's family.

MINISTRIES ALIGNED

We want every ministry to line up under the vision and every ministry sees where it falls and how it helps to fulfill the vision. We are all on the same page and understand that any ministry we are involved with and in needs to fall under this Vision. So what falls under this particular part of the Vision. Let's see...

- ✓ **Worship Services/1st Super Sunday Nights**
- ✓ **Family Suppers**
- ✓ **Special Events: Kidz Extreme / Trunk or Treat / Tailgating / Relay for Life & Others**
- ✓ **Class 101 – Starting Point**

TARGETS TO LOOK TOWARDS

- ✓ **We want to see a 75% over-all average attendance of our Resident Membership in Worship. Currently we are at 58%**
- ✓ **By 2017 with a 10 - 15% Growth Each Year would allow us to move to 2 Worship Services**
- ✓ **Establish a clearly defined process to move people from the “parking lot” to being a deeply connected member.**
- ✓ **Create An Atmosphere of Prayerful Dependence**
- ✓ **Every Member Embracing Their Role to being Deeply connected to Christ and then helping others to get connected to Christ and the Church.**
- ✓ **Full-Time Worship Leader – 2020**

TEAMS TO CONNECT WITH

- ✓ **Creative Worship Team (Help plan Message Series Themes, Décor, New Message Series)**
- ✓ **Technical Team (Sound, Lights, Video)**
- ✓ **Parking Lot & Door Greeters – Front Door Team**
- ✓ **Welcome Team – Middle Door**
- ✓ **Follow Up Team – Back Door**
- ✓ **Prayer Team**
- ✓ **Starting Point Team**

Our Contribution & Commitment

Take the Next Step for The Sake of the Call

- ✓ Commit to Praying every day for Vision 2020 and your part in it
- ✓ Identify and Take the Next Step in Each of the 4 Areas
- ✓ Take the Next Step and Commit to serve on one of the 4 Teams
- ✓ Take the Next Step Up on the Generosity Ladder
 - First Time – Occasional – Intentional - Tithing – Extravagant

All this will come together on Sunday, February 22 and March 1st. On the 22nd and March 1st we will have our 3rd Annual Ministry/Missions Fair but this one will be bigger than all the others combined. And also March 1st will be our Commitment/Generosity Sunday where we will commit to Vision 2020 our time, resources, and financial commitments and we will bring the 1st ones on that day. Then that night we will come back and celebrate the outcome. It's going to be a huge day!