

Columbus Free Methodist Church

2021-2026 Vision Plan

As our church approaches our 100 years of existence this September, we are thankful for what God has done through us in the past, but we are even more excited about the future God has in store for His Church!

At Columbus Free Methodist Church our mission is for everything we do to be built around sharing the good news of Jesus to the city of Columbus and beyond, and giving opportunity for people to deepen their personal, and collective, relationship with Him. We want everyone to know who Jesus is, and experience the freedom that He can bring to our everyday lives. For others to know that freedom we need to do our part in sharing His message, and how He has changed our lives, with whom we do life. We do recognize there are days that life is hard, and we as a family of believers are meant to walk through the good and challenging moments together. We are called to encourage, challenge, and hold each other accountable as we strive to follow Jesus and share His love with others.

This document lays out our vision, which is where we want our church to be, and how we plan to grow, in the next five years as we work to accomplish the mission Jesus has called us to. This five year vision is broken into four different areas: 1) Team, this is how we want our staff and volunteer teams to look and operate, 2) Ministry, this describes who we are and what we do to accomplish God's mission for our church, 3) Inviting Culture, this is how we share who our church is with the community, 4) Impact, these are more tangible and measurable goals for us to reach in the next five years. Our Vision does not necessarily lay out how everything will be accomplished, just that this is what we want to look like in the next five years. We also are not saying that we will only do these things or that we have zero flexibility. We will follow the lead and direction of the Holy Spirit, but this is our current plan.

Some of the statements below are close to who we already are or what we do, while others may seem like more of a stretch. As a church we will not be able to accomplish what God has called us to without taking a step of faith to follow Him, which will lead us to doing things we never would have thought possible before.

Team Vision

Our Team Vision is what we want our volunteer and paid staff teams to look like. We call these teams because they are a group of people working together to accomplish the same goal or mission. This could be working together to accomplish our church mission, sharing the message of Jesus to the city of Columbus and beyond, or more ministry specific goals, like teaching the Bible to our children. These are characteristics that we hope to see throughout our whole church as well, but they need to be first seen in our teams, which is the focus of this section of our Vision Plan.

1. Our staff, and volunteers, share passion for the mission of sharing the message of Jesus to the city of Columbus and beyond.
2. Our staff and volunteers:
 - a. Work as a team to accomplish what we are called to as a church and individuals.
 - b. Are focused on carrying out the mission and vision of God's church, rather than advancing our own areas or personal goals.
 - c. Are driven by love, team work, and are others focused.
 - d. Are valued as children of God, not just people doing the work of ministry.
 - e. Are open to discussing conflict and disagreements with each other in healthy ways.
 - f. Use their God given spiritual and natural gifts to share the message of Jesus to the city of Columbus and beyond.
 - g. Live out 1 Thessalonians 3:12-13 **“May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you. May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones.”**
3. Leaders focus on developing people more than just doing the work of ministry.
4. We care for paid staff by:
 - a. Encouraging personal and family health (financially, spiritually, physically, and emotionally) to be a priority above the work of the church. If these areas aren't healthy, work for the church won't be either.

- b. Giving opportunity for continued growth by attending conferences and purchasing new resources and materials.
 - c. Giving opportunity to rest and refresh through paid time off.
5. We strive for diversity in all areas of our team including race, age, and gender.
 6. We will continue to invest time, energy, and resources to doing digital ministry as a church. This includes creating positions for volunteers and staff to accomplish digital ministry.
 7. All positions, volunteer and staff, have ministry descriptions with clear roles and explained expectations, which will be reviewed and updated at minimum every two years.
 8. Ministry teams, led by staff and/or volunteers, have the ability to lead and make decisions for their team and area. This only changes if additional budget is needed or if it impacts the church mission, vision, or strategy.
 9. Our Board is structured to focus on oversight and long term future planning.

Ministry Vision

Our Ministry Vision is what we want to look and act like as a church, and how we will work to make that happen. This vision starts with broad statements for our whole church, and then digs into four specific areas that we want to grow in the next five years: Small Groups & Discipleship, Digital Ministry, Wednesday Night Love Chapel Hot Meal, Intergenerational and Family Worship & Activities.

1. Our worship services are an environment where All people can be introduced to and deepen their relationship with Jesus no matter where they are on that journey.
2. We welcome people into our building and God's family, recognizing we are all broken yet all children of God.
3. Children of all ages are safe within our building, and are engaging in activities and lessons that help them grow.
4. We create opportunity for questioning and discovery, while holding firm to what the Bible says.
5. People from all walks of life are welcomed and viewed as valuable.

Small Groups & Discipleship

1. We clearly define what it means to be a disciple, or follower of Jesus, as a continuous process, and create space and opportunity for people to grow as a follower of Jesus through every stage of life.
2. Small groups are a key part of growing as a disciple. These are created to help people grow in their relationship with Jesus, and to live life together.
 - a. Each small group may look and function a little different, but all have an emphasis on Scripture, relationships, and have the ability to be easily reproduced.
 - b. Small groups are a space for questioning, discovery, accountability and prayer within our church. These are a place to walk through the messy and brokenness of life together.
 - c. 60% of our people are participating in small groups of some form.

Digital Ministry

1. Digital ministry is defined by everything we do online, like our website or social media.
2. Our digital ministry is supported by specific staff and volunteer teams.

3. Our digital ministry strategy is built around healthy engagement that is personal growth oriented.
4. We give people the opportunity to discover and question their faith with others online.
5. Our digital ministry is an arm of who we are, where people can share stories of life change and continue to grow in their personal relationship with Jesus, whether they are in Columbus or miles away.

Social Outreach

1. We continue to deepen our partnership with Love Chapel to partner with other churches in the community to serve these least of these through food pantry, financial assistance, and nightly hot meals.
2. The Wednesday night Love Chapel hot meals at our building are turned into Dinner Church. Dinner Church is where we interact and build relationships with people from all walks of life through: conversations around the table, gospel messages, music, and living life together.
3. We create opportunities after Dinner Church to walk with individuals and families through the hurts, addictions, and crises that life can throw at us.
4. We continue to deepen our partnership with Transformational Living Ministries by giving to them and building relationships with the residents of the homes.

Intergenerational and Family Worship & Activities

We strive to be a church that cares for the whole health of a family, not just one piece or area. We also recognize that if *our* church family is going to be healthy we need our people of all ages and backgrounds to be worshipping our Heavenly Father together. This means we create space for the 70 year old and the 4 year old to worship and learn together. This is an area of our vision that we need God to breath more clarity into, but this foundation is vital to who we are.

1. We are a place where people can feel connected, cared for, supported, and poured into.
2. As a church we minister to and care for the whole family. We understand that personal health is dependent on a thriving and healthy family.
3. We create spaces for all ages to engage with one another in discovery and personal growth.
4. We engage families in activities to help them grow in their faith together.

Inviting Culture

Our church strives to share the message of Jesus to the city of Columbus and beyond, and that starts with the people we live, work, and play with. We want to be a church that trains and equips people to share the message of Jesus in each of those places, which are defined as: **Live**, those who live in our homes and our neighbors; **Work**, those who we work with on a regular basis, whether that be through our job or volunteering; **Play**, people we do activities with outside of our home, neighborhood, or work.

Our focus on training and equipping people to share the message of Jesus and inviting others is essential because we will only grow when those who call this their church home are putting it into practice. With that in mind, how we train and equip people, and do our team and ministry visions is so important because people won't invite unless they have a reason to and feel confident doing it.

As a part of our inviting culture, we want our church to be known as one that is willing to walk with families and individuals through any crises that they may be going through. This will get messy, but Jesus doesn't avoid our mess, so neither should the church.

Impact Vision

Our Impact Vision gives us measurable goals to show how our church is doing in accomplishing our mission over the next five years.

1. Our number of first time guests, non out of towners, in a year matches our average weekly attendance.
2. We are keeping a minimum of 20% of first time guests.
3. Average weekly in-person attendance is over 175.
4. Average weekly engagement on Facebook posts is over 500
5. Baptisms are happening throughout the year
6. Small group ministry is thriving with over 60% involved.
7. We are giving 10% of what we receive as a church each week to local and overseas ministries and missionaries.
8. We are considered by the community to be a welcoming church to families and willing to walk through life and crises with each other.