



# OUR NAZARENE CHARACTERISTICS

At the 2013 General Assembly, the Board of General Superintendents unveiled seven characteristics for the Church of the Nazarene:

1. Meaningful Worship
2. Theological Coherence
3. Passionate Evangelism
4. Intentional Discipleship
5. Church Development
6. Transformational Leadership
7. Purposeful Compassion

While these descriptors do not take the place of our mission “to make Christlike disciples in the nations” or our core values of “Christian, holiness and missional,” they describe what we believe should characterize every Church of the Nazarene and in large part, should be reflected by Nazarenes everywhere. We urge church leaders to emphasize, and all Nazarenes to embody, these characteristics as we go forward. Let us explore how, over time, they might become realities for the global church.

# 1. Meaningful Worship

## A Call to Worship

Come, let us sing for joy to the LORD; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation.

Let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song.

For the LORD is the great God, the great King above all gods.

In his hand are the depths of the earth, and the mountain peaks belong to him.

The sea is his, for he made it, and his hands formed the dry land.

Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the LORD our Maker;  
for he is our God and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care.

—Psalm 95: 1-7a

We may say with confidence that to worship God is to acknowledge Him as the Rock of our salvation, the great God, the great King above all gods, the creator of all things, and the Shepherd who cares for His people.

A. The disciples of Jesus lived in His presence and ministered to others as a result of their relationship.

- Jesus sent His disciples out into the world to minister (Matthew 10).
- He later told them they needed to be filled with the Holy Spirit. They waited in the upper room and the Holy Spirit came just as Jesus promised (Acts 2).
- Once the disciples began their ministry to the world, they became God's ambassadors.
- They brought a message of reconciliation along with their mission of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:11-21).
- Paul said it best, "We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Corinthians 5:20-21).

B. Jesus challenged His followers with the Great Commission.

- "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (Matthew 28:19-20).

## ***The early church truly began to fulfill this commission in the world following a meaningful worship encounter in Antioch.***

**–Acts 13:1-4**

C. *Meaningful worship* takes place as we practice the disciplines of the Spirit such as fasting and prayer.

- The Holy Spirit then sent them out to win others to their faith.
- This happened in the context of worship.
- Worship inspires us and releases the power of God in our lives.
- Worship reorients our lives to that of Christ. It is an imperative spiritual discipline for all believers, used by God to shape us into the holy image of Jesus.
- We must make both personal and corporate worship consistent practices within our lives.

D. *Meaningful worship* allows time in corporate services for God to move among us in His own way.

- The early church did not conduct business through committees or seminars.
- Rather, they gathered frequently for community worship services and allowed God to work freely among them.
- We must be willing to stop our agendas and allow time for God to complete His agenda among us.
- *Meaningful worship* makes room for God to move freely as we wait for Him with expectation.
- We must allow time for God to reveal himself and to convince, move, touch, save, and sanctify people in His own way and on His timetable.
- We should come to every worship gathering with the anxious anticipation that God will meet us in that gathering and move among us.
- We must anticipate God to move in very obvious ways, to do what only God can do, as we gather weekly to worship. We must never ever be satisfied with the ordinary routine of habitual gathering
- The children of God must gather together weekly so they can be powerfully captivated by the Spirit of God.
- Nothing can substitute for the human spirit being energized by God's Divine Spirit.
- This happens best in times of *meaningful corporate worship*.

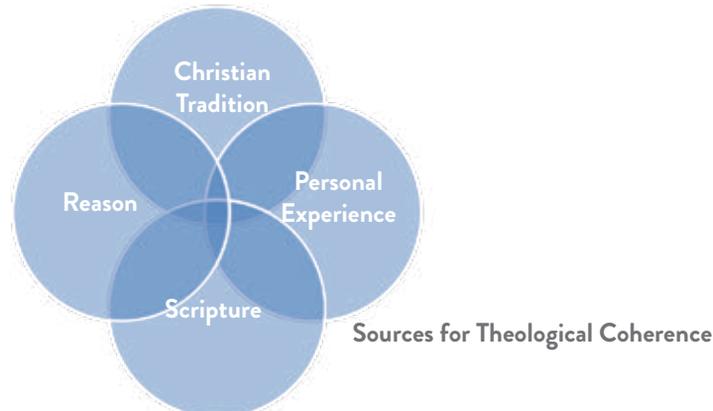
## 2. Theological Coherence

A. Our Nazarene voice must be heard within the larger Christian church.

- It speaks of who we are theologically.
- This is what we affirm, what motivates us to action, and how we live our beliefs in daily life.

B. These are our sources for *theological coherence*.

- Scripture: We believe the holy scriptures are foundational and vital in forming our identity in Christ.
- Christian tradition: We celebrate the orthodox teachings of 2,000 years of history through various Christian traditions.
- Reason: We believe the Spirit of God works through our intellects and gives us discerning minds.
- Personal experience: We believe God works in and through the lives of individuals and communities who follow Christ.



C. These beliefs give us *theological coherence*.

- We are Christian.
  - We affirm faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God.
  - We affirm Christ as the second person of the Trinity.
  - We hold to the orthodox creeds and traditions of the Christian church.
- We are Protestant.
  - We believe in justification by grace through faith alone for salvation
  - We give a high place to the authority of Scripture.
  - We believe in the priesthood of all believers.
  - We affirm the sermon as a central feature of the worship experience and place the pulpit at the center of the church platform.
  - We believe the gifts of the Spirit are distributed among all believers in the body of Christ.

- We are evangelical.  
We believe in the possibility and necessity of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ through the forgiveness of sins and transformation of our character into the likeness of Christ.  
We believe in the witness to our faith through changed lifestyles.
- We are Wesleyan.  
We believe the essential nature of God around which all theology builds—“God is love” (1 John 4:8).  
We believe humans exercise free will in order to have meaningful relationships with God.  
We believe God exercises grace and mercy toward humanity.  
We believe God’s prevenient grace goes before a person, keeps that person from going deeper into sin, and draws him or her back to God.  
We believe God’s seeking, redeeming, saving, sanctifying, and sufficient grace works with a person to make him or her into a child of God and gives ongoing victory in the Christian walk.  
We believe in the optimism of grace to break the power of sin in a person’s life and transform the individual from a sinner into a child of God who willfully obeys the Lord with a heart of love.
- We believe holiness and sanctification are real possibilities in this life.
- We believe in the witness of the Spirit.  
We believe in assurance which lets an individual know his or her sins are forgiven by God and gives ongoing awareness that the blood of Jesus Christ continues to cover sins of the past and give daily victory.  
We believe in Spirit-led guidance that lets an individual be led by God for the daily decisions of life. The Spirit of God can lead His children with prompts and checks that provide a sense of direction for life’s journey.

D. We believe there are four essential aspects of a holy life:

- Christlikeness—being transformed daily into the image of Jesus through the work of the Holy Spirit as we make ourselves available to God’s work in us. “Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind” (Philippians 2:1).
- Lifestyle—being set apart for holy purposes to do God’s work in our world. “My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth” (John 17:15-17).
- Temptation and Power to Choose—having the ability to not surrender to addictions or suggestions of the flesh or the evil one but power from God to live the holy life. “I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, and

his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms” (Ephesians 1:18-20).

- Fruit of the Spirit—the perfect love of God that manifests itself in love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness, faithfulness, and self-control. “There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love” (1 John 4:18).

E. We believe in the *via media*—the middle way. We attempt to avoid extremes on both sides of many issues. We focus less on the particulars of the extremes and more on the balance in the middle whenever possible.

### 3. *Passionate Evangelism*

*Passionate evangelism* is our response to Jesus’ love and grace for humanity. The Church of the Nazarene started with passionate evangelism. It continues to be the heart of who we are. In his call to evangelism, Phineas Bresee, the Church of the Nazarene’s first general superintendent, said, “We are indebted to give the gospel to every [person] in the same measure in which we have received it.” We focus on helping people discover a personal saving faith in Jesus Christ.

A. *Passionate evangelism* was modeled by Jesus:

- “When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, ‘The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field’” (Matthew 9:36–38).
- Jesus said, “Don’t you have a saying, ‘It’s still four months until harvest’? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest” (John 4:35).

B. *Passionate evangelism* was mandated by Jesus:

- “He said to them, ‘Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation’” (Mark 16:15).
- He told them, “This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem (Luke 24:46-47).

C. *Passionate evangelism* was released by Jesus:

- “And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come” (Matthew 24:14).
- The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full” (John 10:10).

D. *Passionate evangelism* is empowered by the Holy Spirit:

- He empowers us individually and corporately to live and witness holiness.
- “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

E. *Passionate evangelism* is produced by the Holy Spirit:

- His life in us is evident and productive.
- “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit” (Galatians 5:22–23).

F. *Passionate evangelism* brings new life and new energy to both individuals and the church.

- Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! (2 Corinthians 5:17).
- And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved

G. *Passionate evangelism* is an expression of our obedience to Jesus:

- One of the most undeniable evidences of the transforming power of the gospel is the life of Paul.
- In one of his testimonies, the apostle said, “I am obligated, both to Greeks and non-Greeks, both to the wise and the foolish. That is why I am so eager to preach the gospel . . . for I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes” (Romans 1:14–16).

H. Passion for Christ is our point of entry to the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20)—our training and equipping follow:

- In consequence, everyone should know Jesus Christ.
- In congruence, everyone, even the less-gifted in techniques or methods, should respond with passion and share Christ resolutely.

I. *Passionate evangelism* invites us to rely on the power of God’s Word that compels us to share the good news of salvation with others:

- We study the Bible in faith; then we tell others what God’s Word says.
- The power of the gospel message speaks to the hearts of men and women, boys and girls who need a restored relationship with God.
- Jesus provides our example. “For the Son of Man came to seek and save the lost” (Luke 19:10). “As Jesus was teaching the people in the temple courts and proclaiming the good news” (Luke 20:1a).

J. *Passionate evangelism* propels us to knowing Christ more completely:

- It conveys who we are, our lifestyle. Our passion for life is no greater than our passion for evangelism. By choosing to live we choose to evangelize.
- It verifies what we know. As the blind man who was healed by Jesus testified simply, “One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!” (John 9:25).
- It tests how grateful we ought to be for the privilege. “Freely you have received, freely give” (Matthew 10:8b).

K. *Passionate evangelism* motivates us to disciple:

- Throughout life’s journey, we seek to influence people we know and people we do not know as we share our walk of faith.
- Every Christ-follower must be passionate enough about his or her relationship with God that sharing a personal testimony flows naturally in conversations with others.

L. *Passionate evangelism* inspires our creativity:

- Tools—A few examples include *JESUS* Film, Evangeball, and Evangecube.
- Methods—Many methods, one message.
- Strategies—Mass evangelism, friendship and personal evangelism, small groups, urban, and many more.

***We are indebted to give the gospel to every person in the same measure in which we have received it.***

—Phineas Bresee

## ***4. Intentional Discipleship***

A. Jesus called the church to *intentionally* make disciples.

- “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:19-20).
- The church has an *intentional* method for making Christlike disciples.
- Christlike disciples are people who dwell in Christ, grow in Christlikeness and do what He does. They deny themselves, love and obey God with all their hearts, souls, minds, and strength (Mark 12:30, John 15, Luke 9).
- *Intentional* relational discipleship is helping people develop obedient intimate relationships with Jesus. In these relationships, Christ’s Spirit transforms their character into Christlikeness—changing new believers’ values into kingdom values, and involving them in His mission of investing in others in their homes, churches, and world.

B. We begin by leading individuals into personal relationships with Jesus Christ.

- The faith journey begins with confession of sin and forgiveness by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.
- These new creatures in Christ are regenerated and adopted into the family of God.
- Regeneration produces changed hearts and changed lifestyles, testimonies of God's grace to those they know.
- We immediately nurture these new believers into the community of faith teaching them from the very beginning that they have been saved not just for themselves but for those whom they will influence and lead to Christ. They will become disciple-makers who will disciple others who will become disciple-makers.
- Discipleship involves helping someone else follow Jesus more closely.

***Intentional relational discipleship is helping people develop obedient intimate relationships with Jesus. In these relationships, Christ's Spirit transforms their character into Christlikeness—changing new believers' values into kingdom values, and involving them in His mission of investing in others in their homes, churches, and world.***

C. We *intentionally* develop Christlike disciples through a strong pulpit ministry.

- Our pastors preach instructional sermons on how to grow in our faith in Christ.
- Our pastors preach sermons that are biblically-based and nurture their people toward growth and a deeper hunger for the Bible.
- Our pastors allow the Word of God to become the basis of all discipleship efforts.
- Our pastors teach their people how to study the Bible and think about what the Word means as well as how it applies to their lives.
- Our pastors strive for a balanced scriptural diet of preaching throughout the year.
- Our pastors rely on the Holy Spirit of God to enliven all that they do to come together in a balanced way to form Christlike disciples.
- Jesus preached to the multitudes and carefully taught His disciples in a small group.
- Jesus did not preach without telling a parables (stories) to help the people learn (Mark 4:34).

D. We promote Sunday School classes that nurture and grow Christlike disciples.

- Our Sunday School teachers teach lessons that are aimed at making Christlike disciples both in the exposition of Scripture and in the scriptural application to life.
- Our Sunday School teachers take a personal interest in young believers beyond the classroom to answer their questions about the Christian faith and encourage them to grow in God's grace.
- Our Sunday School system of instruction offers programming from the cradle to senior citizens; it provides the scope and sequence of material that studies the entire Bible in an organized way. "Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it" (Proverbs 22:6).

E. We develop small group Bible studies that encourage accountability.

- Small group Bible studies provide both group and one-on-one accountability for new believers and those seasoned in the faith.
- In small groups, healthy relationships are developed that move beyond regular meetings to connecting with friends as a way of life.
- These study groups offer a mixture of Bible study and social interaction that is essential for growth in grace.
- Small discipleship groups develop into support systems for in life together beyond Sunday.

F. We encourage spiritual growth of Christlike disciples through a well-planned church schedule.

- Bible quizzing programs.
- Caravan children's ministry.
- Vacation Bible Schools.
- Christmas and Easter outreach programs.
- Compassionate ministry efforts.
- Discipleship ministry to others.
- Ministries for men, women, senior adults, singles, special needs, sports teams, and a variety of other affinity groups are encouraged to help people make the connection to Christ and His church.

G. We urge believers to use every means available to grow and develop their personal faith.

- Read the Bible with study helps; listen to the Bible on audio files.
- Pray daily.
- Listen to Christian music.
- Read Christian literature.
- Find an accountability partner who will pray every day that you will be Christlike.
- Find an accountability partner who loves you so much they will ask you hard questions.
- Develop the discipline of regularly telling others what God is doing in your life.

H. We encourage believers to learn to seek daily the presence of God.

- We best describe the Christian life as a close personal relationship with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.
- *Intentional disciples* grow best in the likeness of Christ as they spend time with Him.
- Thus, we listen daily for Christ's voice; we feed daily on His Word; we enjoy His daily presence.
- Christlike disciples intentionally seek Him and readily share Him with those whose lives they touch.

## ***Prayer, the Word of God, and intentionally helping each other to be more like Jesus characterize dynamic discipleship in the church.***

I. We encourage disciples to *intentionally* make disciples

- The Lord commissioned and authorized us to make disciples (Matthew 28:19-20).
- We prayerfully invite a mature Christian to *intentionally* disciple or mentor us.
- We prayerfully invite a small group of believers to become a part of our discipleship group.
- We invest our lives in these disciples as together we seek the Lord.
- Story-centered methods of teaching the Bible in small groups provide a solid biblical foundation for enabling disciples to learn the Bible and pass its message on to their circle of influence.
- Prayer, the Word of God, and *intentionally* helping each other to be more like Jesus characterize dynamic discipleship in the church.

### ***5. Church Development***

A. The Christian church began with Jesus Christ who started the first community of faith.

- The community of faith gathered regularly to worship God.
- Then it began to grow and multiply as new churches emerged through the first missionary journey of Paul and Barnabas (Acts 13-14).

B. Paul launched a second missionary journey with plans to plant churches, but the Holy Spirit led Him in a different direction (Acts 16).

- We must always remain open to God's new vision for His work and be led by His Holy Spirit.
- Paul had a vision. It did not come from other people or a community survey. It came from the heart of God. Our vision for planting new churches must come from God's heart as well.

- Paul had a vision of a man. It was not a vision of a blueprint, a strategy, a slogan, a flowchart, or a program. Paul's vision focused on lost humanity. Our vision for planting new churches must remain clearly focused on lost people who need a relationship with Jesus Christ.
- Paul had a vision of a person from Macedonia. This was a person of a particular location, culture, language, and history. God will give us a vision of a particular people group or community as well. We need to discover and obey God's vision for us.
- Paul had a vision of a person from Macedonia who was standing. This person was not inferior to Paul. We look at each other eye to eye. This person to whom I go with the gospel is worthy of our respect.
- Paul had a vision of a person from Macedonia who was standing and calling, "Come over and help us!" This is the vision that drives us. We must go to our city, neighborhood, clan, tribe, and family.

## *We must bring Christ to our world.*

C. God's vision involved continual divine leadership as He unfolded His plan for *church development* to Paul.

- The man of Macedonia turned out to be a woman. Lydia of Philippi became the most receptive individual to this ministry opportunity.
- Paul found his most receptive listeners in a group of women who were praying by a riverbank.
- Rather than using a Jewish synagogue as in previous church starts, Paul began this work in a home.
- Lydia, a merchant of expensive purple cloth, led this house church.
- Strategies for *church development* may not involve previously proven patterns.

D. Church planting requires great sacrifice.

- The ministry efforts of Paul and Silas landed them in prison. They made the personal sacrifice willingly. They sang songs of praise to God as they suffered on His behalf (Acts 16:25).
- Today, church leaders and followers of Jesus pay that same price for starting churches. It requires many hours of prayer, tears, toil, effort, money, and sometimes bloodshed to start new churches.
- In spite of the personal difficulty of Paul and Silas, a new house church sprang from the event with the Philippian jailer as its new pastor.

E. We must live in the presence of God so we sense an awareness of His abiding Holy Spirit in spite of our circumstances.

- Paul and Silas did not view their beating and night in jail as a personal loss. Rather, they sensed God's Spirit giving them victory in spite of the negative circumstances.
- Paul and Silas knew they were being directed by God's Spirit; they knew He would care personally for them.
- The earthquake that hit the Philippian jail reminds us that God is still involved in situations like these (Acts 16:25-26). He does not forget us when our ministry efforts are difficult.
- When we obey the Lord and do His will, in God's timing, the Lord will intervene with majestic power. While evil opposes the advance of God's kingdom, God has the final word.
- We are not building or advancing God's kingdom by ourselves; God is building His kingdom.

***In the Church of the Nazarene, our definition of a church reads: Any group that meets regularly for spiritual nurture, worship, or instruction at an announced time and place, with an identified leader, and aligned with the message and mission of the Church of the Nazarene may be recognized as a church and reported as such for district and general church statistics (Board of General Superintendents). In other words, a church is a cluster of believers, not a building or property.***

F. *Church development* strategies have changed throughout church history.

- The Christian church constructed no church buildings during the first 400 years of church history.
- The concepts of dedicated church buildings, property, and full-time pastors for churches came later.
- The Holy Spirit is now leading the church to reproduce itself in new ways.
- Each church is encouraged to plant a daughter church.
- These daughter churches meet in homes or other available sites.
- Each pastor mentors a co-vocational pastor who is in ministerial training.

- This model requires no funding to start the daughter church; laypeople can respond to God's call to assist in the launch of the new church.
- This model allows God to grow His church in new places around the world; He only needs receptive hearts to catch the vision, respond to the call, and allow God to lead.

G. The purpose of *church development* is to reach new people for Jesus Christ.

- Jesus said, "I must proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns also, because that is why I was sent" (Luke 4:43).
- We are ambassadors of the kingdom of God who dedicate our lives to *church development*.
- Our efforts are not aimed at sustaining an organization.
- We want as many people as possible to come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.
- We want to then disciple these new believers into the image of Christ.
- Jesus said, "I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest" (John 4:35).

## 6. *Transformational Leadership*

A. We seek to develop leaders through a model of Christlikeness. Jesus is our example.

***A transformational leader is a Christlike leader.***

B. *Transformational leaders* are submissive and humble.

- They follow Jesus Christ who subjected himself to the will of the Father (Philippians 2:5-8).
- They fully depend upon God to answer their prayers and supply all their needs (John 15:7).
- They submit to the authority of others and think of themselves less (Ephesians 5:21).

C. *Transformational leaders* are servants.

- They follow the example of Jesus Christ who did not come to be served but to serve others (Mark 10:45; Matthew 20:28).
- They lead from this spirit and attitude of servanthood (Philippians 2).

D. *Transformational leaders* are visionary.

- "Where there is no vision the people perish" (Proverbs 29:18 KJV).
- "And the Lord answered me, and said, 'Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables'" (Habakkuk 2:2 KJV).
- Jesus painted a vision of the kingdom of God; we must do the same in ways that everyone can understand clearly.

- This characteristic is a distinguishing factor between followers and leaders. Visionary leaders search God’s vision for the church and the communities and cast the vision to others.

E. *Transformational leaders* think strategically.

- They have the capacity to translate the vision for their communities into instruments for God’s kingdom.
- They understand the circumstances of our times and find biblical answers as did the children of Issachar (1 Chronicles 12:32).
- They envision souls that must be won to the kingdom of God.
- They cast the vision into action steps that mobilize believers into the harvest fields.
- They are able to put vision and mission into simple but effective kingdom plans (Luke 14:28-30).

F. *Transformational leaders* are team builders.

- Jesus is our model; He built a team and empowered it, rather than doing all the ministry by himself (Matthew 10).
- Jesus’ disciples were ordinary people, but they turned the world upside down (Acts 17:6).
- *Transformational leaders* build teams that involve everyone in the church in God’s kingdom work.

G. *Transformational leaders* are compassionately assertive.

- When Jesus launched His disciples into evangelistic work, He instructed them to be “as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves” (Matthew 10:16).
- *Transformational leaders* must know how to balance grace and law, justice and mercy, all with holiness.
- They must be wise decision makers who hold appropriately to their decisions.
- However, their decisions must be tempered with compassion.
- They must speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15).

H. *Transformational leaders* communicate clearly.

- During His earthly ministry, Jesus often said, the one who has “ears to hear, let him hear” (Matthew 13:43). Jesus wanted His followers to listen consistently and persistently.
- *Transformational leaders* must attempt to speak with the same clarity and precision as Jesus Christ.
- *Transformational leaders* understand the importance of clear, consistent, and compelling communication: “If the trumpet doesn’t sound clearly, how could God’s army get ready for the battle?” (1 Corinthians 14:8).

I. *Transformational leaders* empower others to raise the next generation to lead the kingdom.

- Joshua's leadership style failed to raise up the next generation of leaders; he led only for his generation (Judges 2:10).
- *Transformational leaders* do not build empires for their tenure; they train both the present and the next generations.
- They identify, train, and develop mentors who equip, empower, and release leaders for the sake of God's kingdom.
- No leadership is successful without leadership succession. "And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others" (2 Timothy 2:2).

## 7. *Purposeful Compassion*

A. *Purposeful compassion* displays the loving heart of God.

- God's sending His Son to the world and Jesus dying on behalf of humanity are God's ultimate gifts of love and compassion.
- John 3:16-17 tells us that God gave us His Son from the overflow of His love so we may have eternal life. Similarly, 1 John 3:16-17 tells us that the love of God for humanity is expressed in genuine acts of compassion of believers towards God's creation.
- Jesus' life, ministry, death, and resurrection illustrate One being moved in love on behalf of another and on behalf of the world (Matthew 9:36).

B. *Purposeful compassion* is always done in the name of Jesus.

- Jesus is our model of compassion. In the Gospels, Jesus was moved within His innermost being to "suffer with" humanity.
- Jesus was particularly moved with compassion in love and care for those who were poor, lost, sick, marginalized, and vulnerable.
- Both fully God and fully human, Jesus is our model of how to live and how to love.

*We do every act of service, generosity, or mercy in Jesus' name, and we offer our efforts to reveal Jesus' love.*

C. *Purposeful compassion* respects the dignity of each person.

- The people of God offer hope, love, and help in the name of Jesus in ways that honor each person as someone who is made in God's image, as God's creation.
- Compassion does not have a motive other than to extend the love of God in Christ.

*D. Purposeful compassion* flows naturally from transformed believers.

- The church is called to embody God's own love and compassion in the world.
- The work of compassion is never completed by human effort or social activism alone.
- As the Body of Christ, our compassionate calling touches all areas of life in a holistic way formed by the life of Jesus and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
- The Holy Spirit transforms the hearts of believers who, in turn, work to bring physical, social, and spiritual transformation to our world.
- Compassion is meant to be integral and active in the life and ministry of every congregation.



E. *Purposeful compassion* is our Wesleyan definition of holistic mission.

- We are sent by God the Father and empowered by the Holy Spirit to go into the world to love and serve the Lord.
- We believe that the Father is already working by the power of the Spirit in each person's life, and we are called to come alongside this good work.
- True evangelism brings the call and commitment of entering into and getting involved in the lives of those around us.
- In the name of Jesus, we draw near to suffering and brokenness, and we seek to bring healing, hope, peace, and love to persons who are in need, marginalized, and vulnerable.
- We are drawn toward one another in loving friendship and community, which brings social consequences. This is also how God builds and extends the Body of Christ.

F. *Purposeful compassion* flows from our lives as an expression of our commitment to God's mission to redeem a broken world.

- We seek to see, hear, and respond to broken and hurting humanity in the same way God does.
- We seek to invest all of the resources available to us to alleviate human suffering and seek God's plans of restoration, wholeness, salvation, and peace in and for the world.
- We further attempt to repair the systems of societies in cycles, which create the structures of injustice that contribute to the oppression of people and systemic evil in our world, and we do so in the name of Jesus.
- We seek in all we do to help fulfill the Lord's mission and bring glory to God (Micah 6:8).