

HISTORY

In order to experience a sense of belonging to a particular group of people, it is helpful to understand and identify with that group's history, core beliefs, and guiding principles. In this session we will examine each of these things as they pertain to Mosaic.

Why the Church Began

Late in the fall of 1983, seven families met together to discuss the question, "Was there a need in the Northwest Arkansas area for a new church with a distinctive emphasis and approach to ministry?" After considerable time in prayer, both separately and together as a group, these families launched Fellowship Bible Church of Northwest Arkansas. Throughout the Spring of 1984, they continued to meet to establish a core who understood and were committed to the vision and mission for this new church. Then, on May 27, 1984, they had their first public worship service. By this time the core had grown to 17 families, and the church met each Sunday for corporate worship and throughout the week in small groups that met in homes. It began to grow as more and more people experienced life-change through Fellowship's ministry across Northwest Arkansas.

One Church – Multiple Congregations



Mosaic Begins

In 1998, Fellowship was growing by leaps and bounds and found itself "bursting at the seams." There were quite literally people standing around the back and side walls with every seat filled. The church leadership began to explore the possibility of expanding to include services on Saturday nights as a way of relieving some of the crowding on Sunday morning. However, as they developed the idea, they decided it should be more than just an extension of Sunday morning; Saturday night would have its own leadership team. In September 1998, a Saturday night church was born.

Since that time, Mosaic has grown to become a separate congregation, sharing the same Elder Board and facilities as Fellowship Bible Church, but led by its own staff and guided by a unique expression of Fellowship's vision for reaching Northwest Arkansas and the world for Jesus Christ.

Our Vision, Mission, and Guiding Principles

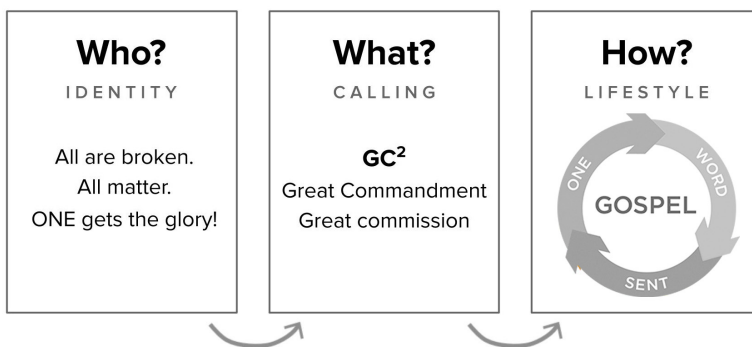
Although Mosaic operates as its own congregation, it shares the same overarching vision and mission as all other Fellowship congregations.

Our Vision:

"to change the heart and soul of Northwest Arkansas and the world."

In order for hearts and souls to change, we believe they have to experience an encounter with the grace and truth of Jesus Christ. When people encounter Jesus as He really is, they experience life- change.

The way we express this vision and mission in Mosaic is pictured in the following graphic.



Our Mission:

"to produce and release spiritual leaders who know and express the authentic Christ to Northwest Arkansas and the world."

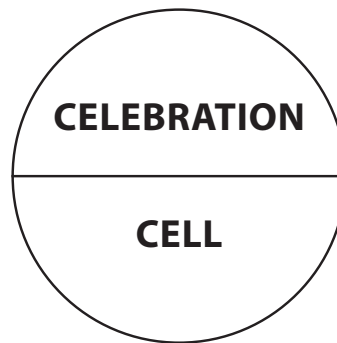
We define a spiritual leader as a "maturing disciple with a ministry focus." Our mission statement shapes our philosophy of ministry; we seek to know and express the Living Word (Jesus Christ) by submitting to the written Word (the Bible).

Our Church Organization and Ministry Structure

Only two distinct offices are given for the leadership of the church: elders (or overseers or shepherds—Acts 20:17, 28 and 1 Pet 5:1-2) and deacons (or servant leaders—Phil 1:1 and Acts 6:1-6). The spiritual qualifications for both offices are found in 1 Timothy 3:1-16 and Titus 1:5-9. The assembly was to recognize those who were spiritually qualified for church leadership. These individuals were then to minister to the church by godly service and rule. The bottom line is that Fellowship practices "Elder Rule." The Elders are responsible for the

direction and health of Fellowship. All decisions of the Elder Board are made by consensus. Elders are nominated by the Body and selected by the existing Elder Board. Fellowship does not have a Deacon Board that is named as such. We believe that deacons are extensions of the Elders' responsibility. Our staff and our community group leaders perform most of the functions of New Testament deacons. However, formal deacons could be selected by the Elders as needed or desired.

Under this leadership, we carry out the ministry of the church. The Bible instructs the Church to perform three timeless functions: worship, make disciples, and serve. The goal of all of these is the Glory of God. In an effort to keep the form (or structure) of our ministry simple and flexible, we use the "Cell/Celebration" model, where the church gathers as a community to carry out these functions. This church model will be discussed more in other sections of this material. A simple explanation of the two components of the model is as follows:



Celebration – We **gather** together in large groups on a weekly basis (Saturday night) to worship God and hear from His Word.

Cell – We **scatter** into disciple-making small groups for the purpose of fellowship, Bible study, prayer, accountability, ministry, etc. (Live as *One*, Live by the *Word*, Live as *Sent*). Most of these groups meet in homes rather than on the church campus.

Our Core Values: Because we value...

- Truth: the Bible is our anchor and compass.
- Relationships: we love, evangelize, disciple, and serve together in the name of Jesus Christ.
- Accountability: we entrust our lives, attitudes, and actions to God and one another.
- The Gospel: Jesus Christ is central to everything we do.
- Generosity: we live selflessly through stewardship of time, talent, and treasure.
- Life-change: we celebrate the transforming power of Christ.
- Team: we serve effectively and efficiently through collaboration and cooperation with others.

Our Core Beliefs

We recognize that there may be some latitude on some doctrinal beliefs, and we try to give room for differences in these areas. However, we do believe there are a few core doctrines upon which we must agree in order to have unity. We believe in the...

- Authority of the Scriptures
- Trinity (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)
- Full deity and full humanity of Christ
- Substitutionary atonement of Christ
- Salvation by grace, through faith alone, in Christ alone
- Virgin birth of Christ, His visible and bodily resurrection, and His visible and bodily return
- Priesthood of the believer (every member ministry)

(Note: A complete Doctrinal Statement is included on pages 21-23)

In any discussion about doctrine, we need to address how we handle doctrinal differences within the Body of Christ. Our approach is to embrace the teaching of one of the early Church Fathers (Saint Augustine) who said, "In the essentials, let there be unity; in the nonessentials, let there be liberty; and in all things, let there be charity."

Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.
Ephesians 4:2-6

What does it take for followers of Christ to "keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace"?

What are some obstacles to maintaining unity and peace?

How would you respond to the statement, "Unity does not require uniformity"?

Accept the one whose faith is weak, without quarreling on disputable matters. Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To their own master, servants stand or fall... Each of them should be fully convinced in their own mind... So then, each of us will give an account of ourselves to God... So whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God.

Romans 14:1, 4a, 5b, 12, 22a

How would you define a "non-essential" belief or a "disputable matter"?

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

John 13:34-35

If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.

1 Corinthians 13:2

The whole point of what we're urging is simply love—love uncontaminated by self-interest and counterfeit faith, a life open to God.

1 Timothy 1:5 (MSG)

The Scriptures

We believe that the Scriptures of both the Old and New Testaments are verbally inspired of God, in whole and in part, error-free in the original writings and the supreme authority of faith and practice for the believer in Jesus Christ. We further believe that there is but one true interpretation of any Biblical passage and this is only found when one accurately applies the literal-grammatical-historical method of interpretation. (Ps 119:160; 2 Tim 3:16-17; 2 Pet 1:20-21; Heb 1:1-2, 4:12)

God

We believe there is but one living and true God who is infinite, eternal, and unchangeable. We further believe that God is one in essence while existing in three distinct persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Though each person of the Godhead possesses precisely the same nature and attributes, each function differently in respect to God's purposes and dealings with man. (Deut 4:39; 6:4; Matt 28:19; 2 Cor 13:14)

The Father

The first person of the Trinity orders and directs all things according to His own purpose, pleasure, and grace. The Father is sovereign in creation, providence, and redemption. He has decreed all things that come to pass for His own glory. He graciously involves Himself in the affairs of men, hears and answers prayer, and saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ. (2 Chron 29:11; Ps 103:19; Matt 6:9; John 5:19-24; Eph 1:2-6)

The Son

The second person of the Trinity is both the eternal Son of God and virgin-born Son of man. Jesus Christ, fully God and fully man, surrendered nothing of His deity during His earthly life. Having led a sinless life, He satisfied the Father's justice concerning sin by His substitutionary death. We believe in His bodily resurrection, His physical ascension, and His visible return to earth to establish His earthly kingdom. (John 1:14-18; Acts 1:11; Rom 3:24-26; 1 Cor 15:1-8; Col 2:9; Heb 2:17-18; Rev 20:11-15)

The Holy Spirit

The third person of the Trinity executes the will of God in the world of men. It is the Holy Spirit who applies the salvation that Jesus Christ secured through His death on the Cross. It is the Holy Spirit who convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. It is the Holy Spirit who empowers the Church to live a lifestyle pleasing to God, endowing it with special gifts which equip believers to accomplish distinct ministries, planned beforehand by God the Father. (John 3:1-8; 15-16; 16:4-15; 1 Cor 12; Gal 5:16-25; Eph 1:13-14; 5:18-21)

Man

We believe that man was directly created in the image of God to enjoy His fellowship and to fulfill God's will on earth. Man sinned by voluntary act of personal disobedience to the will of God; as a result, all men are spiritually dead and subject to the certainty of physical death. The fall of man was a non-repeatable historical fact; the effects of which are transmitted to all men, each of whom is born with a sinful nature and sins habitually in thought, word, and deed. (Gen 1:26-27; 2:7; 3:3-4; Rom 1:18-32; 3:10-23; Eph 2:1-3)

Salvation

We believe that Jesus Christ died for our sins as the only sufficient, substitutionary sacrifice. All who believe in Him are declared justified by the Father on the grounds of Jesus' death and resurrection. All who receive the Lord Jesus Christ by grace through faith have been regenerated by and baptized in the Holy Spirit. They become, thereby, the children of God, forever, and members of the one true Church, the universal Body of Christ. This salvation will result in righteous living and good works as the believer submits his life to the control of the Holy Spirit who directs the life of the believer in harmony with the Word of God. (John 1:12; 3:16; 5:24; 14:6; Acts 4:12; Rom 3:21-26; 5:8; 1 Cor 15:1-4; Gal 3:26; Eph 1:7; 2:8-10; Titus 3:4-7; Heb 10:10-12; 1 John 5:11-13)

The Church

We believe that all who have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit belong to the one true universal Church and are directed by the Scriptures to associate themselves in local, visible churches. The local church is the only scriptural representation of Christ's invisible Church and consists only of regenerated believers. The local church is autonomous in its government and recognizes its own members for the Biblical offices of elder and deacon. Two ordinances have been committed to the local church: Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The purpose of the Church is to lead others to Christ, mature them in the faith, and equip them for personal ministry. (Matt 16:13-28; 28:18-20; Acts 2:41-47; 4:1-16; 1 Cor 11:23-29; Eph 2:19-22; 4:11-13; Heb 10:23-25; 1 Pet 5:1-3)

Marriage

We believe that God has established marriage as a lifelong, exclusive relationship between one man and one woman and that all intimate sexual activity outside the marriage relationship, whether heterosexual, homosexual, or otherwise, is immoral and therefore sin (Gen 2:24-25; Exod 20:14, 17; Matt 19:4-6, 9; Rom 1:18-31; 1 Cor 6:9-10, 15-20; Jude 7). Marriage ceremonies conducted on Fellowship Bible Church premises or by Fellowship Bible Church staff should represent the establishment of this covenant relationship. We believe that God created the human race male and female, and all conduct with the intent to adopt a gender other than one's birth gender is immoral and therefore sin. (Gen 1:27; Deut 22:5)

Future

We believe that prophetic scriptures teach the imminent return of Jesus Christ. (John 14:1-3; 1 Thess 4:15-17) We believe the second coming of Christ will occur in a bodily, visible manner with great glory. (Acts 1:9-11; 1 Cor 15:20-28; Revelation 20:1-4)