

From Our Pastor...

United by a Common Purpose

Part 5 of the Series

For more than twenty years, Ingleside has been a remarkably united church. Across those two decades, we have learned some important truths about our unity – some of which I am recounting in this series of articles.

In part 1 of this series, I offered three answers to the question of why we should talk about this topic now. Part 2 focused on the fact that the Bible says that our unity is both a gift and a goal. Part 3 looked at seven dimensions of our spiritual unity. Last week we discovered how we are united by what we believe – our doctrinal unity.

This week I am reminded that we are ***united by a common purpose***. When the Apostle Paul wrote to the church at Philippi, he exhorted them to make his “joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being ***one in spirit and purpose***” (Philippians 2:2, emphasis added).

Since 1998, at Ingleside we have said that our purpose can be stated in a way that is as simple and memorable as the ABCs. The reason our church exists is to . . .

- A** dore God,
- B** ring people to Jesus,
- C** all believers to membership,
- D** evelop members to maturity, and
- E** quip them for ministry.

Or, as the words of our *Church Constitution* puts it:

Desiring to glorify God through His Son Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, in the power of the Holy Spirit and affirming the five foundational, biblical purposes of worship, evangelism, fellowship, discipleship, and ministry, the purpose of Ingleside Baptist Church is to adore God, bring people to Jesus, call believers to membership, develop members to maturity, and equip them for ministry. (Article II)

Along the way, some churches seem to lose a clear sense of why they exist. Their focus becomes fuzzy and they begin to drift. When that happens, they seem to have no direction at all or attempt to go in every direction all at once. The result is almost always diminished ministry effectiveness.

I am thankful that, at Ingleside, our purpose is biblical, clear, compelling, and unifying. Young and old, newcomers and old timers, worshipers at different times (and perhaps in different styles), at Ingleside we are united in our commitment to bring glory to God through worship, evangelism, fellowship, discipleship and ministry. ***God intends for our common purpose to be a key element of our unity at Ingleside.***

I'm grateful to be part of a church family with great diversity, yet united by our free and wholehearted embrace of God's purposes for his church. And I am convinced, *the best is yet to come!*

Your Pastor and Friend,



Tim McCoy