

# DISCOVER



You probably have questions about us, which is why you're holding this pamphlet. And below you'll find some of those answers. But first, we thought it important to share some of our own questions, which we hope will help you understand us as much as the answers and plans we've developed in response. These are the questions that have put us on the journey we're on today.

- What if a church focused on the outcome of transformation rather than the outcome of building programs?
- What if a church focused on sending people out rather than bringing them into our seats?
- What would happen if we radically gave up our drive for material goods, status, and power for the sake of others?
- What does flourishing for all people look like?
- How can the kingdom be seen more fully and powerfully through the many people groups and cultures present in our gatherings?

# OUR NAME

The word Tabernacle comes from the Hebrew word *mishkan* (Exodus 25:8), which means “to dwell.” The Tabernacle was called the Tent of Meeting in the Old Testament because it was the place where God revealed Himself and dwelled among His people.

Throughout Scripture we see God desiring to dwell among his people.

- He dwelled with Adam in the Garden (Genesis 3:8).
- He dwelled with his people in the Tabernacle (a complex tent in the desert) and eventually the Temple (Exodus 29:43-46)
- He dwelled amongst His people in the person of Jesus, His Son (John 1:14).
- Today, God dwells in among his followers, the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).
- Ultimately, God will dwell amongst His people in the New Creation, the new earth, the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:3).

Because God dwells inside of His followers, He has called us to live out the vision of His kingdom here on earth.

For this reason we desire to be a faith community who not only attend church but live out what it means to be the church. He has called us to be the Tabernacle Community, a people where His Spirit dwells so that those who are broken can find community and meaning as well as discover their destiny in the One who loves unconditionally.

## VISION

We are becoming the *Tsaddiqim* in our city, pursuing the multi-ethnic vision of the Kingdom.

## MISSION

*To make new and better Christ followers who influence the culture and impact the city and the world for the glory of God.*

We are sent as followers of Jesus because collectively, we are the visible representation and witness to the invisible God who loves His creation.

There are three values that support this mission:

**Belong.** We belong to a Father who lavishes love, grace, and mercy on us, so we are a church open and welcome to all who walk through our doors. We strive for the flourishing of all humanity.

**Believe.** We believe that God has purposefully placed Tabernacle in the Alger Heights neighborhood of Grand Rapids, MI, where we are called to be his hands and feet, meeting people where they're at just as Jesus would.

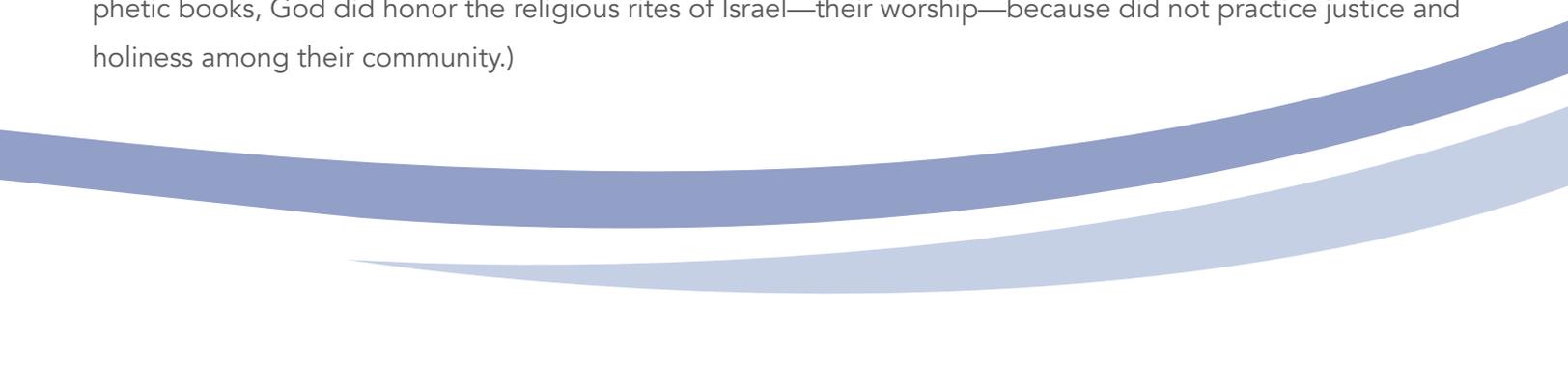
**Become.** We're consistently asking ourselves, in humility before God, "Where is God calling us?" and "how can we be better formed into Christ?" We have four practices where we seek transformation from God for the sake of our community.

## OUR PRACTICES

- |                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| <i>Spending Time with Jesus</i> | Spending daily time with God centered around His Word, prayer, and other spiritual disciplines are pathways to experience His presence. |
| <i>Engaging in Community</i>    | Regularly participating in close association with other followers of Jesus serves the purpose of growing us in community.               |
| <i>Giving of Myself</i>         | We express love by giving of our time, treasure and talents for the blessing and benefit of others.                                     |
| <i>Sharing Christ</i>           | Jesus calls us to spread his name by effectively telling others about Jesus and how He has given us new life and new purpose.           |

## GUIDING PHILOSOPHY

The ultimate measure of our effectiveness as a church is not what happens inside the building, but rather the impact the people of our congregation have on their communities and the world. (In Isaiah and other OT prophetic books, God did honor the religious rites of Israel—their worship—because did not practice justice and holiness among their community.)



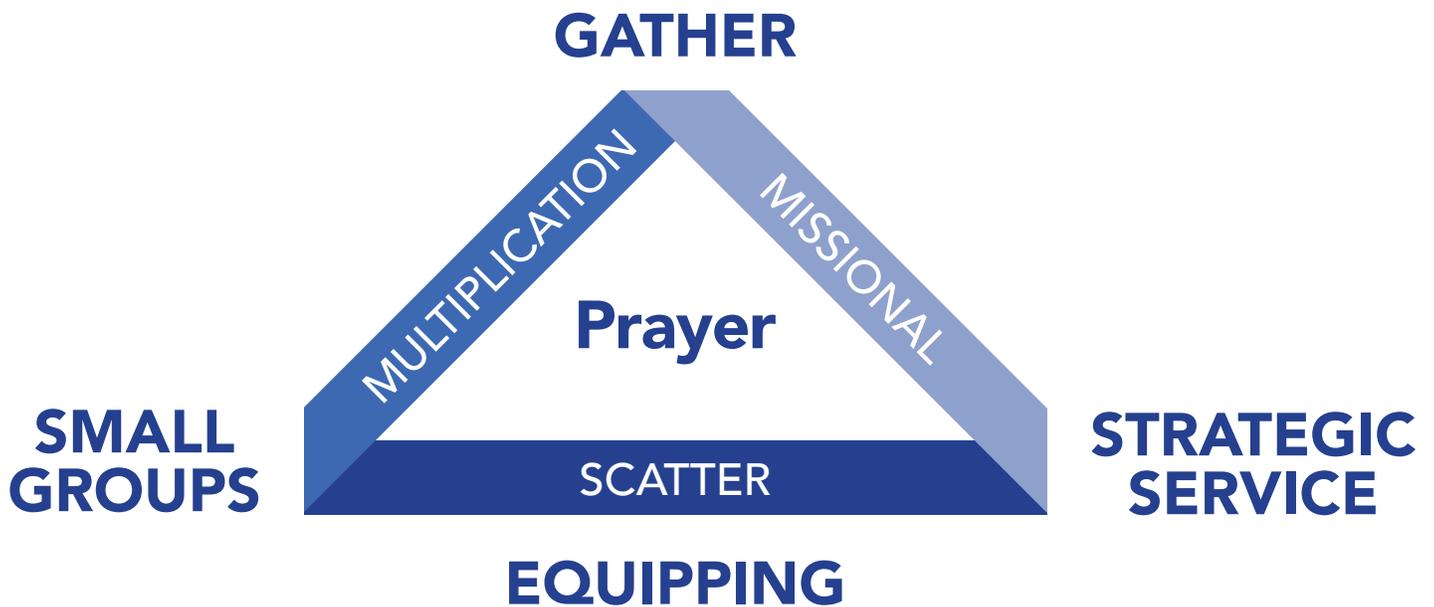
# CONNECTING POINTS AT TCC

**Sunday Celebration:** This connecting point is a time where our diverse community enjoys the presence of God by engaging in a variety of expressions of worship. (Romans 10:14-15).

**Small Groups:** This connecting point allows the church to grow larger and smaller at the same time. People are challenged to grow in Christlikeness by learning and serving together, caring for and encouraging one another, and supporting one another through life (Acts 2:46). You will also be placed in a Regional Group once you become a regular attendee.

**Strategic Service:** This connecting point is an opportunity for people to serve both inside and outside of these four walls, with our teams or somewhere in the community. We equip people to build God's church and his broader kingdom in the world (Ephesians 4:12).

## SUNDAY CELEBRATION



# HISTORY

In March 1999, pastors Marvin Williams and Artie Lindsay attended a preaching and growth conference in California that sparked an interest and vision for planting a disciple-making church. In October of that same year, five men met for a weekend of seeking God's face for direction with planting a church. Immediately following the retreat, God put the vision on hold and there was no discussion of the vision and the weekend for an entire year.

Exactly one year to the date, the vision was revived and discussions of a church plant resumed. In January 2001, Marvin Williams, Artie Lindsay, Kizombo Kalumbula, and Tim Nesby began meeting on a weekly basis for prayer, and in July 2001 over 100 prayer partners from around the country began interceding with them for this new faith community. In October 2001, an announcement was made at Calvary Church and Messiah Missionary Baptist Church that Marvin, Kizombo, and Artie would be planting a new church in the Kentwood area.

In April 2002, Tabernacle held its first "taste of Tabernacle" event on the fourth Sunday. They met once a month on Sundays at Crestwood Middle School in Kentwood, MI and developed its launch team during weekly bible studies. On September 8, 2002, Tabernacle Community Church was born with the official launch and celebration service. On July 20, 2003, Tabernacle Community Church moved to its current location, which was the Evergreen Christian School – 2550 Eastern Avenue, Grand Rapids, MI. In July 2007, Tabernacle purchased the Eastern campus which included two buildings and 5 acres of land.

In January 2010, Marvin Williams accepted a call away from Tabernacle to become the senior teaching pastor at Trinity Evangelical Church in Lansing, Michigan.

In June 2010, Tabernacle hosted a luncheon with three neighborhood churches, Seymour CRC, Alger Park CRC, and The Branch. They prayerfully discussed "what would unity look like for the four churches to work together?" After monthly meetings and prayer gatherings of the staff from these various churches, the Alger Heights Collaborative was born to be a neighborhood-based asset-based community development initiative. In 2012, the four churches hired a Community Connector to lead what is now known as the Alger Garfield neighbors collaborative.

In 2013, Tabernacle brought Building Bridges Professional Services under as a ministry for youth employment services to youth who have aged out of the foster care system. This social enterprise is now its own L3C under the parent company, the Grand Rapids Nehemiah Project (GRNP), which is Tabernacle's 501 c(3) non-profit organization. The GRNP became an official entity in 2017. The second social enterprise, Rising Grinds Café, opened in November 2017.

In March 2016, Tabernacle became debt-free as a ministry.

In late 2017, we opened up some of our space to be utilized by the Refugee Education Center for a multi-cultural daycare center.

In 2018, Tabernacle went through an organizational restructure which resulted in the addition of several key staff positions. The first Executive Director of Grand Rapids Nehemiah Project was hired in August of this year.

In 2019, Tabernacle transitioned from a program-based to an outcome-based discipleship model.

In 2020, we launched a five-year Building Impact Campaign, focusing on the health of our spiritual building (our community life and mission) and physical building (the building we own).

## TABERNACLE LEADERSHIP

We are an elder-led community, which means that pastorally appointed leaders govern the spiritual, social, and institutional vitality of our community, as well as the overall ministry direction of our church.

## BUILDING IMPACT 2025

This season refocuses our community life and mission around four practices (listed under “Our Practices”) that we believe will order our lives and community in such a way that we are continually being shaped into the image of Christ. When we put these practices into motion in our lives, we believe we will Build Impact as new and better Christ followers for the good of our neighborhood, region, and world. This is Building Impact: Spiritual goals. Building Impact also refers to the needed repairs and upgrades to our gathering space to support our mission as the people of God. This is Building Impact: Physical.



**BUILDING  
IMPACT**<sub>2025</sub>

The Building Impact logo is a symbol that represents the four formation areas (the four colors) that make up a wholly formed person stretching over the city and the church community. We are oriented toward love for the church and the city. An arrow points upward to highlight our ultimate orientation toward Christ, seated on his throne and forming his people.

# WORDS YOU MIGHT HEAR:

***“Partner on Mission”*** – this is our word for “membership.” We believe all followers of Christ have a role to play in God’s mission in this world, whether through your work, your family, or this community. We pursue the kingdom together as partners in gospel service in the Grand Rapids area.

***“Ministry Partner”*** – this is our word for “volunteer.” It highlights that we all have a responsibility to serve God, and you can do so through Tabernacle in specific areas— technology, music, leading a small group, communications, children’s ministry, etc.

***“Tsaddiqim”*** – this Hebrew word speaks to our collective identity before God as those who are willing to disadvantage ourselves for each other, for our neighbors, for our city. It is the unique calling of Christ followers in our age to make sacrifices for the greater good of others.

***“Spiritual Formation”*** or ***“Formation”*** – Spiritual Formation is the ordering of the whole person toward love through daily habits by the power of the Spirit. We’re all being shaped by a number of forces. We want to be very intentional about habits that God can use to form us into the image of Christ, individually and collectively.

***“Sunday Celebration”*** – this is our word for “Sunday service.” We joyfully and gratefully gather as God’s people each Sunday!

## FIRST STEPS:

1. Visit a small group: attend the small group Open House or visit Connect Central on a 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday. Indicate your desire to become part of one of Tabernacle’s Regions (we’re divided into 6 regions in the metro area and surrounding areas) to be connected to your region and the regional facilitator.
2. Participate in the 4 Formation workshops.
3. Pray for us and give us the opportunity to pray for you
4. If at some point you’ve decided that Tabernacle is your home church, but do not wish to become or have not become a Partner on Mission, please let us know.

Email [info@tabernaclecommunity.org](mailto:info@tabernaclecommunity.org)

# How to Become a Partner on Mission:

1. Attend the Four Formation Workshops and commit to each area
2. Receive an invite to meet with an elder or small group leader
3. We celebrate you as a Partner on Mission and you live out your commitments

## CONNECT WITH US



### Options to sign up for our email communications:

1. Email [info@tabernaclecommunity.org](mailto:info@tabernaclecommunity.org) requesting to be added.
2. Go to our website ([tabernaclecommunity.org](http://tabernaclecommunity.org)), wait for the pop-up prompt, and fill in your information.

### Download our app with the link on our website

3. Listen to past messages or the message from today
4. Take fill-in-the-blank notes
5. View our upcoming calendar and social media feed

**Livestream at** [tabernaclecommunity.org/live](http://tabernaclecommunity.org/live)

Tabernacle Community Church  
2530 Eastern Ave SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49507  
616.988.9268 | [info@tabernaclecommunity.org](mailto:info@tabernaclecommunity.org)