

Our vision is to be a church that proclaims and demonstrates the love of Jesus in Jacksonville and around the world

A. This last part of the Vision may actually be the sum of all the statements of our vision.

B. When we are a Church, a Community of followers of Jesus that:

1. *Invites people to 'come as they are'*
2. *Inspires imperfect people to connect with a perfect God through a relationship with Jesus Christ.*
3. *Creates a loving community for everyone.*
4. *Challenges one another to grow in faith and serve others.*
5. *Empowers the next generation to lead.*
6. *Celebrates lives being redeemed and communities being transformed through authentic compassion.*

C. Those things will actually lead us naturally to be a Church that: *Proclaims and demonstrates the love of Jesus in Jacksonville and around the world.*

D. After the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, the book of Acts records his appearance to His disciples

E. *(Acts 1:3-11 NRSV) After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. {4} While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father. "This," he said, "is what you have heard from me; {5} for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." {6} So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?" {7} He replied, "It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. {8} But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." {9} When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. {10} While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. {11} They said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."*

F. Even the first followers of Jesus were a little confused about the Mission.

G. *{6} So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?"*

H. The early disciples were still caught up in their vision for the Kingdom.

1. It was tied to their national pride.
2. It was connected to their ethnicity.
3. It was defined by their value system.

## II. The Promise of Power

A. *{7} He replied, "It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. {8} But you will receive POWER when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."*

B. Jesus tells His disciples that His work is going to be carried on by them.

C. Jesus had spoken to them in His earthly ministry about the Power of the Holy Spirit and that there would be an outpouring into their lives that would empower them to do the works that he did.

D. *(John 14:12-14 NRSV) Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. {13} I will do whatever*

*you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. {14} If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.*

E. There is room for interpretation concerning what Jesus meant that His disciples would do greater works than He did.

F. I think the root meaning is that while Jesus was on the earth, the power of the Holy Spirit resided in Him.

G. After His death and resurrection, that power is now available to all who call upon Him as their savior and lord and therefore followers of Jesus will do greater work than Jesus was able to do by Himself.

H. One of the great benefits of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is that it brings personal empowerment to the believer because of the healing and redemptive work it does.

I. If used only for personal benefit, the believer becomes inward focused and quite often the Spirit-filled believer misses the point of the outpouring.

J. The works that Jesus did were works of unconditional love. That love was outward focused; it recognized the need for human redemption and healing of the body, soul and mind. It was gracious and selfless, driven by a God who would wash the feet of His followers, who would give His own flesh and blood as a sacrifice for the sins of the world, and therefore that would be the same call on our life.

### III. We are Witnesses!

A. At CrossRoad we share that vision to Proclaim and Demonstrate the love of Jesus and the power of His Holy Spirit.

B. *{8} But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my WITNESSES in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."*

C. In our modern language, witness means one who has seen and is called to testify.

D. The Greek word for witness is *Martus (Μαρτυς)*, which is the root of the word we also translate *Martyr*.

E. The cost of discipleship throughout history and even in parts of the world today has produced true Martyrs, people who have been persecuted, imprisoned, tortured and executed because they were followers of Jesus Christ.

F. Whether we face that kind of treatment, all believers must face the cost of discipleship that faith in Jesus Christ is evidenced by our willingness:

1. *(Mat 10:37-39 NRSV) Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; {38} and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me. {39} Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.*

2. *(1 John 3:16 NRSV) We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us—and we ought to lay down our lives for one another.*

G. Lloyd Oglivie writes: Our lives become dull and dreary as Christians if all we do is take in inspiration from study of the Bible, worship and preaching, and an endless round of classes taught by stirring teachers where application is not mandated. The Holy Spirit's power is given for witness!

H. There is an old saying that if you were put on trial for your faith, would there be enough evidence to convict you.

### IV. One Church: Local and Worldwide

A. Our Vision for the church is to proclaim and demonstrate the love of Jesus Christ locally and around the world.

B. *{8} But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in JERUSALEM, in all JUDEA and SAMARIA, and to the ENDS OF THE EARTH."*

### V. Jerusalem: Inside the Walls

- A. Bill Hybels has inspired me and a whole host of leaders to regain the vision that “The Local Church is the Hope of the World.”
- B. Jerusalem was the center of Jewish faith. It was there that Jesus was crucified and resurrected.
- C. The local Church was born in Jerusalem.
- D. I am a product of a great local church. I had a profound call to serve as a local church pastor. I happen to believe that the work that is done inside the walls of this building are significant.
- E. We can argue the effectiveness of local churches throughout history, but Jesus ordained that there would be some sort of communities of faith that would be located in communities where people could come for worship, encouragement, compassion, community.
- F. The local church is the mission and when it is strong, people are empowered to broaden the mission to Judea, Samaria and to the World.
- G. Jesus gave no set way to do this, but at CrossRoad we felt like it was a Biblical principle to use only 90% of the offerings we receive on our Mission and to dedicate 10%, a tithe, to ministries that occur outside our walls.
- H. Since CrossRoad has been in existence \$2,411,979 has gone outside the walls of this church.
1. *General Outreach (includes monthly support payments) – 2,075,635*
  2. *Haiti Kids – 188,976*
  3. *Haiti sister church – 23,643*
  4. *Honduras Hurricane (1998) – 6,628*
  5. *Tsunami – 16,047*
  6. *Sudan – 35,000*
  7. *Hurricane Katrina – 27,050*
  8. *Bahamas, west end – 17,000*
  9. *Bahamas, Inagua & Nassau – 7,000*
  10. *City Rescue Mission Lenten Offering 15,000*
  11. *Total – 2,411,979*
- I. This doesn’t include the amount that people have raised to go on the ACCESS 218 Launches, Len Ministries, Costa Rica, and several more.
- J. If CrossRoad Church failed to exist, I believe that most of those funds would still be in personal bank accounts, on in the bank accounts of cruise lines, and restaurants.
- K. Even with the 90% we use, much is done for Outreach.
1. VBS, Children’s Ministry
  2. Youth
  3. Access
  4. Mom to Mom, Shelly Marsh, 22% have no church affiliation.
  5. Events like Fall Festival, Super Heros, our Christmas Musical and Christmas Eve service, in fact every Sunday service is designed with some aspect of reaching out to people who are not inside our walls.
  6. I believe the church is the engine that drives all mission.
  7. It happens inside and outside our walls.

## VI. Judea: Outside the Walls

- A.I think every local church, every local church lead pastor, every local church leader needs to have a vision for their immediate community.
- B.I love being a part of a denomination, because it automatically links us with every square inch of our immediate community.
- C.We partner with Simpson Church in their ministry to the people of their community.
- D.We work with Habitat for Humanity, City Rescue Mission, Here's Life Jacksonville (Say Yes Centers, Boxes of Love, Worknet), Family Promise, our partnership with Windy Hill School.

**VII. Samaria: Tearing down walls!**

- A.Samaria as a region is really not that much further geographically than Judea, but religion and rebellion had built walls of hatred that divided the Jews and the Samaritans.
- B.The conflict in the middle east goes way back and is still the source of much hatred and mistreatment.
- C.Jesus tells the story of how a Samaritan reaches out to a Jew who is in need. He shows that part of His mission is tearing down walls of hate that exist between people of different cultural and even religious beliefs.
- D.Jesus' call to send the believers into Samaria is a call for compassion and justice.
- E.We are called to unity among all people, for those of us with much to share with those who have little, to end racism and ultimately *To Eliminate Human Suffering In The Name Of Jesus*.
- F.Compassion and justice: Brian McLaren "Compassion is pulling people out of the river who are drowning. Justice is finding out who's throwing them in and stopping them."
- G.Sharon Sanders, the principle, just approached me with a new opportunity to possibly start a food distribution center at Windy Hill, staffed and stocked by Roadies.

**VIII. To the ends of the earth: A Church Without Walls**

- A.Another great aspect of being in a denomination, United Methodist particularly, is that we are a part of a worldwide movement that is proclaiming and demonstrating the love of Jesus.
- B.We are known for cooperating with others across denominational lines.
- C.When we saw an opportunity in Haiti that wasn't within our denominational structure, we sensed that God was at work there and we joined Reciprocal Ministries and formed a sister church relationship in Tiburon.
- D.We are now working to establish a relationship with our denomination in Haiti.
- E.One of the great parts of our vision to go into all the nations is being fulfilled even within our walls.
  1. Our congregation continues to grow more diverse.
  2. The number of Hispanics grows, and we even have a service led by Henry Cruz that meets in our building.
  3. The Pilipino population grows
  4. Recently Jacksonville is attracting a population from India.
  5. A healthy church is a church that is diverse culturally.
  6. When the Holy Spirit was poured out on the day of Pentecost, people from all nations began to worship together and God's Holy Spirit gave them the understanding of all the various languages.

**IX. Derrick**

**X. We are Witnesses!**

- A.If *CrossRoad Church failed to exist would we be missed*, is a question that we have often asked as we have evaluated the effectiveness and purpose of our church in this community.

B. We ask you as a member to live by that same axiom: If you failed to exist in the body of Christ, in the world, in your family, at your work, in your school, would the role you play to proclaim and demonstrate the love of Jesus Christ be missed.

C. Dean Lohse as a result of being involved as a leader at CrossRoad and in ministry in Costa Rica: Every Member of the CrossRoad Community Can Say 3 Things:

1. My Church has changed me for the better by:
2. My Church is changing the world by:
3. This is what I do:

D. Send to [mywitness@crcumc.org](mailto:mywitness@crcumc.org) or click on My Witness from the [crcumc.org](http://crcumc.org) home page