



## The Mission of Grace

*Out of love for Jesus and people, the mission of Grace Church is to make mature disciples of Jesus Christ in ever-increasing numbers.*

We believe fulfilling the Great Commission<sup>1</sup> is a responsibility entrusted by Jesus to every church and every Christian, not simply to missionaries or particularly gifted evangelists. We also believe the call to make disciples involves more than sharing the good news about Jesus, often referred to as evangelism. Rather, it refers to the whole, life-long process of proclaiming the good news, incorporating those who respond in faith into the life of the church, and teaching them to obey all that Christ has commanded.

In short, we believe the Great Commission is Christ's call to the church to go deep and go wide in the making of disciples.

We go deep in disciple-making by helping people lay a foundation for life-long growth through the practice of the regular means of grace.<sup>2</sup> Our discipleship classes, growth groups, and other events reinforce our foundation and expand our understanding of how to relate to God, others, and the world around us. In fact, we must be going ever deeper into Jesus in order to go ever wider for him.

Going deep includes teaching our children to love and obey Jesus. We celebrate what the Bible says about their inclusion in the covenant family of God<sup>3</sup> and are pleased to assist their parents in leading them into the welcoming arms of the Lord.<sup>4</sup>

We go wide in disciple-making by equipping our congregation to live as ambassadors of Jesus<sup>5</sup> in their neighborhoods, workplaces, and networks of relationships. In his earthly ministry, Jesus cared for the broken and called sinners to repentance in profoundly personal ways.<sup>6</sup> The first-century church, walking in the fear of the Lord and the comfort of the Holy Spirit,<sup>7</sup> exploded in growth as they sacrificially did the same.<sup>8</sup> We, like they, seek to live as salt and light,<sup>9</sup> ready to proclaim the reason for the hope within us.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Matthew 28:16-20

<sup>2</sup> Private and public worship, private and public scripture intake (reading and meditation, preaching and teaching), private and public prayer, right observance of the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, and the fellowship of believers.

<sup>3</sup> Acts 2:39; 1 Corinthians 7:14; Ephesians 6:1

<sup>4</sup> Matthew 19:14

<sup>5</sup> 2 Corinthians 5:19-21

<sup>6</sup> Matthew 9:35; John 4:1-30

<sup>7</sup> Acts 9:31

<sup>8</sup> See Michael Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church: Revised Edition*

<sup>9</sup> Matthew 5:13-16

<sup>10</sup> Acts 8:4; 1 Peter 3:15

The inevitable outcome of adoption into God's family is an ever-deepening desire to see others experience the same love, acceptance, and security that we have come to know in Christ. In response to his great love, we long for others to share in our joy. We pray and strive in the strength God supplies to be used in our time and place for the advance of the gospel in the greater Rochester area and around the world.