



# NORTH SHORE

COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH

## Goals 2018-2019

Intro: Compelled by the Father's love exemplified in Christ, and empowered by a significant outpouring of the Holy Spirit, we are prayerfully bringing these goals before the Lord and the congregation, asking that they will spur us to labor and pray that we might take decisive steps toward "preparing the altar" for a gospel movement on the North Shore in these coming years. These goals were informed by countless conversations, both formal and informal, with members from all over NSCBC. Therefore, while stepping forward as leaders to put these goals into words, we really believe they capture the longings and leadings of so many people in our church. These goals do not cover everything we long to see the Lord do through us, but express areas we see as not only strategic for kingdom advance, but as needing a greater degree of focused, proactive and innovative leadership and oversight, to come to pass.

### 3-5 year goals

- **GOAL:** Develop 100 disciples in our church who:
  - 1) Are experiencing personal gospel renewal.

**What does this mean?** Tim Keller helpfully describes personal gospel renewal this way: "Personal gospel renewal means the gospel doctrines of sin and grace are actually experienced, not just known intellectually. This personal renewal includes an awareness and conviction of one's own sin and alienation from God and comes from seeing in ourselves deeper layers of self-justification, unbelief, and self-righteousness than we have ever seen before.

There is a new, commensurate grasp of the wonder of forgiveness and grace as we shed these attitudes and practices and rest in Christ alone for salvation. Perhaps we have previously said that we were "resting in Christ's work, not our own work" for salvation, but when we experience gospel renewal, we have a new clarity about what this means in our mind and a new experience of actually doing it with our heart."

This type of being renewed personally is the wellspring out of which all of the other changes will flow, both personally (greater growth in holiness, a greater hunger for God's word, growth in hospitality and witness) and on a corporate & social level (the church loving one another well, being unified, working for justice in the world and defending the powerless, etc...)

2) Have a growing understanding of the gospel narrative, and how to apply it to the issues of their everyday life and world. (GOSPEL)

**What does this mean?** We hope to see people really grow in their grasp—with both the head and heart—of the gospel narrative. By “the gospel narrative”, we are referring to the story of God’s gracious work to rescue and restore his fallen creation, both at “the ground level” (rescuing and restoring us, as well as our response), and “at 30,000 feet” as well (restoring the entire cosmos). We want people not only to grow in their grasp of this narrative, but also to feel like they can situate themselves in it, and apply its good news to their individual struggles, hopes, fears, and aspirations, as well as to pressing societal issues of the day. We hope to see the gospel increasingly come to define and root people’s identity and self-understanding, such that they grasp the call to live both distinctly different from the surrounding culture, yet also deeply engaged with it, for its benefit.

3) Are forming deep, meaningful, and honest friendships, both inside and outside of the church. (COMMUNITY)

**What does this mean?** Rich friendships are not only an incredible blessing in and of themselves, as we all search for “a place to belong”, but are also the primary context in which spiritual growth occurs. Friendships also take hard work to form and maintain. We aim to see people striving to form the kind of friendships that are long lasting, transparent, and supportive; friendships where each person can feel safe to “let their guard down” and to “show their real selves.”

4) Have a growing awareness of the everyday settings where God has placed them for mission and are intentionally trying to live as a witness for Christ there. (MISSION)

**What does this mean?** We often struggle to view the places we actually spend most of our time during the day—our workplaces, schools, homes, cafes, and wherever else we actually find ourselves- as our “mission fields”, and lack the understanding, boldness, or creativity for how to live as fruitful witnesses for Christ in these settings. We aim to see people really grasp that they are “missionaries” in these everyday settings, and make bold, creative efforts to communicate Christ’s grace there, in word and deed.

5) Are engaged in intentionally leading others to live as gospel-centered disciples, either formally or informally.

**What does this mean?** This is the hardest component to develop, as we often feel inadequate and untrained to “pass on” our own imperfect knowledge and example to other Christians. Though we’ll never have a perfect grasp of the first four points (above), we aim to see people intentionally passing on to others the grasp they do have. As Paul told Timothy, “What you have heard from me...entrust to faithful people who will be able to teach others also.” (2 Tim. 2:2).

The wording “formally or informally” means that the “passing on” could happen through an official church ministry (e.g. serving as youth ministry leader, teaching a Christian Formation class, etc...), or simply in a relational setting (one-on-one discipleship, etc...). What matters is that the effort to “pass it on” is intentional—not simply “trying to be a good example”, but actually identifying certain individuals and “passing on” your growing grasp of the first four points.

What would success look like? We’d know we accomplished this goal if, in 3-5 years from now, we saw a significant and noticeable portion of our regular church attenders experiencing significant transformation at a heart level (point 1), striving to embrace our strategic lens of gospel, community, and mission (points 2, 3, and 4, respectively), and engaged in passing along their growth to others in intentional and creative ways.

If this goal is a success, you could also expect to hear several testimonies of life change, on a regular basis. There would be no need to “try and find out” if people are experiencing gospel renewal, because people would testify to it themselves. You would likely see the beginnings of a noticeable shift and expansion in the leadership of our institutional church ministries (classes, small groups, service leaders, etc), away from “the usual suspects” and towards new and growing members. You could expect to see more people from unchurched backgrounds showing up to our services—likely not an overwhelming number by this point, but enough that you’d be able to tell that “this is different than five year ago.” You would also likely see a cluster of solid conversion and baptism stories. Lastly, if the Lord helps this goal come to pass, there will simply be an invigorating “sixth sense” that the Holy Spirit is undeniably “on the move” among a large number of people in our church.

**A note on “measurement” and the number 100:** Two interrelated questions naturally arise from this goal. The first question relates to how it’s even possible to “measure” this goal, and the second question relates to the number 100—where does the number 100 come from? Is it arbitrary? Is it helpful?

**On measurement:** Early feedback on this goal has surfaced issues related to the potential difficulty of measurement, and the difficulty can be seen, interestingly, from two totally opposite angles. On the one hand, some might be concerned that our measurement won't be specific enough. After all, the best goals are specific and measurable. Though we can measure easily-quantifiable targets like baptisms or attendance, how do you "measure" the type of spiritual growth described above? On the other hand, some might be concerned that attempting any type "measurement" at all is too rigid, forced or imposing, for such a mysterious and organic process as spiritual growth.

Though both of these concerns are legitimate, the characteristics of the disciples we hope to develop are specifically written to communicate that the important factor to measure is growth, rather than "perfection" or "arrival." Thus, for example, whereas it may be too ambiguous to measure whether someone "does" or "doesn't" understand their missional front line (point 4), one could likely attest, however, to whether or not their understanding is "significantly different" than what it was 3-5 years ago. When Paul tells his protégé Timothy to "practice these things and immerse yourself in them, so that all may see your progress" (1 Tim. 4:15), he's indicating not only that progress, rather than perfection, is the aim for his growing disciple, but also that progress is and can be observable! Practically, speaking, we'd envision some kind of survey where people could answer for themselves if they're significantly growing and engaging in the areas listed above.

**On the number 100:** On the one hand, shooting for the number 100 "to the T" misses the aim of this goal. We likely wouldn't be dissatisfied if, after five years, 97 people could attest to significant renewal and growth!

On the other hand, the number 100 isn't arbitrary either. First, 100 represents a number large enough to force us into prayerful dependence upon a great work of God. Second, the number 100 forces us to strategize and prioritize multiplication: developing the type of disciples who can themselves make disciples. This will naturally compel us to think about how we can creatively promote and equip people intentional, interpersonal discipleship in a relational context, because programs alone typically lack the "multiplication factor." Lastly, 100 represents roughly a quarter of our current average in-season church attendance. Though we obviously want to see each and every person at NSCBC developed as a disciple who can claim the five things above as true of them, if, in five years from now, one quarter of our church can say they are significantly growing and engaging in these five areas, then a "tipping point" will likely have been reached, at which those 100 can powerfully influence the rest of the church.

- **GOAL:** Plant a self-replicating church in Essex County, which shares our heart to see Christ's kingdom advance on the North Shore.

What would success look like? Simply put, success would look like a new gospel-centered church on the North Shore. This church would have a solid and committed leadership team, an invested core of members, and a clear vision. It would be easily discernable that this church shares our heart to reach the North Shore for Christ, and places the gospel at the center of their congregational life and ministry, even as their terminology and "flavor" will differ from ours. This church would be on a solid, outlined plan towards sustainability within a target time window, and would also have both the intent and strategies laid out to multiply.

## 1 year goals

### GOSPEL

- **GOAL:** Cast and begin to implement a vision for a multi-dimensional approach to developing reproducing, gospel-centered disciples.

**What would success look like?** This goal would be our key "next step" for discipleship at NSCBC. Practically-speaking, it'd be a success if by the end of the year, we: 1) building on the work of the Discipleship Think Tank, finalized a clear, written definition of who a disciple is, and clearly communicated that definition to the church, 2) finalized a clear, written vision for discipleship at NSCBC, and how that vision naturally flows out of and relates to our overall vision to see a gospel movement on the North Shore, 3) began helping each ministry of the church articulate for itself how it uniquely contributes to our church's overall discipleship vision, beginning with these six ministries: Sunday Worship, Adult Christian Formation, Small Groups, Missional Communities, Outreach, Connect. (In year two, Youth & Children's ministries would be next on deck for this process, but they are, in several ways, already engaging in this process, with Ben in the Youth ministry, and with our Children's ministry recently adopting a new gospel-centered curriculum.)

**Some Potential "Next Steps":** This would be Ben's key, discipleship-related focus for this year, so this would largely fall under his leadership and initiative. It's essential that we come to a working, church-wide definition of a "disciple"- one that is simple enough to be memorable and helpful, but one that also allows for elaboration and unpacking in order to bring out the rich nuances of the word. Thankfully, there is no need to start from scratch on this, because our "Discipleship Think-Tank", which was convened this Spring, did almost all of the

“heavy lifting” in looking into the Bible, discussing, and coming up with “key aspects” of “what is a disciple?”. Ben would likely pull together a few staff, discipleship ministry leaders, and previous Discipleship Think-Tank members (who came close to a definition themselves, and suggested key “components” of a definition) to finalize a definition, before working with Richard and Melissa on how best to communicate and unpack this to the church.

## COMMUNITY

- **GOAL:** See more people in our church developing deep, meaningful, and honest friendships, both inside and outside the church.

**What would success look like?** See point 3 under the first “3-5 year goal” for a more explanation. Success would look like people, likely on a survey, being able to self-identify that they have really made strides, over the past year towards developing these kinds of friendships.

**Some Potential “Next Steps”:** Practically, this is one of the goals that we, as staff, would aim to regularly surface in shepherding various ministries and ministry leaders. For example, this would become a specific topic of conversation among Small Group coaches and Small Group leaders, as coaches could ask and strategize with leaders as to how leaders could structure their groups and encourage their members to pursue these types of friendships. This would also factor into the structure/content of a planned October 2018 Christian Formation course on “Gospel Hospitality” and other courses in the future.

- **GOAL:** Strengthen & resource our existing Missional Communities.

**What would success look like?** Success would look like our Missional Communities experiencing a greater clarity on their calling and strategy, and greater levels of support and awareness from the church at large.

Even though “year two” of our Missional Communities “pilot experiment” will involve much trial and error, we desire:

- 1) our Missional Community leaders to feel strengthened in their calling and understanding of their mission fields, and a good degree more “fluent” in their own ability to communicate their group’s vision of using innovative and collaborative ways to live out the gospel in their community
- 2) our church at-large to have an awareness of what
  - a) a Missional Community is,
  - b) how it differs from a Small Group,

- c) who our current Missional Communities are
- d) how they can pray for them, or otherwise support them as they continue to pilot this new format.

**Some Potential “Next Steps”:** Practically, we need to continue researching the “missional community” format (Melissa has already done a great job of this), and have additional conversations, early in the year, between staff and missional community leaders about how we can best support their groups. Their increased feedback will keep honing the scope and shape of the goal.

## MISSION

- **GOAL:** Clearly communicate the purpose for and strategic value of church planting in serving a gospel movement on the North Shore, and begin to pull together a team of people interested in church planting.

**What would success look like?** This goal is the first step towards our second 3-5 year goal to “Plant a self-replicating church in Essex County, which shares our heart to see Christ’s kingdom advance on the North Shore.” This one-year goal also arises out of the specific conviction that there is never a “perfect time” to plant a church. Churches that plant churches step out in faith and obedience, and make specific plans that battle inertia. We want to do this, and trust that the Lord will supernaturally bless us, as we go forward. Finally, this goal hopefully balances a desire to move beyond discussion and into action, while also taking our time to bring the whole congregation along into a thorough grasp of and enthusiasm about the “why” of church-planting.

Success would look like our clearly communicating why church planting is of strategic importance towards serving a gospel movement, and intentionally working through key questions related to church planting with our church. As we do this, we’d seek to (formally or informally) pull together a team of people who, out of these conversations, have a heart for church planting, not only as “go-ers”, but for prayer support, training, and in many other ways being part of the process.

**Some Potential “Next Steps”:** Bobby, elders, and staff would want to come up with an action plan of the best forums for surfacing, communicating, and unpacking the “church planting conversation”, at a church-wide level, and begin to hone their own “fluency” on communicating the “why” of church planting. We would want to be in contact early and often with experienced church planters, and church planting catalysts to come alongside our church leadership and guide us in this stage.

- GOAL: Develop a partnership with a gospel-centered church in Lynn (largest city in Essex County).

**What would success look like?** This would look like, by the end of the year, being able to point to a specific gospel-centered church in Lynn, with whom we are partnered in a genuine partnership (not paternalistic) both at an organic, friendship level (likely among pastors), but also at a more formal level as well (potentially their membership in the North Shore Gospel Partnership). Even if the partnership is only beginning by the end of the year, it would be understood to be a long-term, not temporary relationship.

By the end of the year, there would hopefully be some plan for how to experiment with partnering together in a specific ministry endeavor for the future (e.g. a VBS, or work-day, or ministry training seminar...)

**Some Potential "Next Steps":** Pastor Bobby would likely take the lead in connecting with another church's pastor, at both a friendship, and then more official level, and there would hopefully be a contingent among the church with a heart for cross-cultural ministry, who, upon learning of and "owning" this goal would dream of, and implement, some steps towards partnership for a specific event. A staff or lay member (TBD) could take the lead in communicating the intent and progress of the partnership, to the church at large, and could also lead the way in planning for partnership at a specific-event level.

- GOAL: Increase our community presence in Beverly Farms.

**What would success look like?** Keeping in mind that change in this area will be gradual, and that this is a one-year (!) goal, it would be a success if we could point to a few (2-3?), new, tangible ways in which our church has either a) been present at, or b) partnered with existing Beverly Farms locations & institutions (e.g. library, Hastings House, West Beach, etc...) for their benefit. For example, we've already hosted open forum discussions at the Hastings House last year, which residents of Beverly Farms (who were not attenders of NSCBC) mentioned benefitting from, and we want to keep benefitting from.

**Some Potential "Next Steps":** In the Fall, this could be a topic for discussion among the Outreach ministries. Additionally, it would be helpful for either a staff member or designated lay leader to sit down with a small group of NSCBC members who live in Beverly Farms and discuss strategy. We could also look at how to creatively use money from the "gospel initiatives fund" to help spur this on.

- GOAL: Promote and expand the amount of kingdom-centered prayer\* in the life of the church.

**What would success look like?** We currently have one group that meets every Friday AM at church to pray for one hour, specifically for revival and the advancement of Christ's kingdom on the North Shore. This is a committed group of 7 covenanted members, and a few others exploring the group right now. Success would look like doubling the number of people praying (~14-15 per week). This would likely involve multiplying into a second group. The prayer initiative would remain organic, and thus not become an official church program.

**Some Potential "Next Steps":** The prayer group would likely continue to meet in its current form for quite some time, to continue building consistency and momentum, further strengthening their group dynamic. Halfway through the Fall, the group could discuss the best ways to make others aware of the group's existence (while still not "officially" promoting it as a church "program"), and potentially about a leader from within, 6-9 months down the road, to begin a second gathering, with the same DNA as the first, towards the end of the year.

\*For a helpful description of "Kingdom-Centered Prayer" see Dr. Timothy Keller's article, *Kingdom Centered Prayer*.