

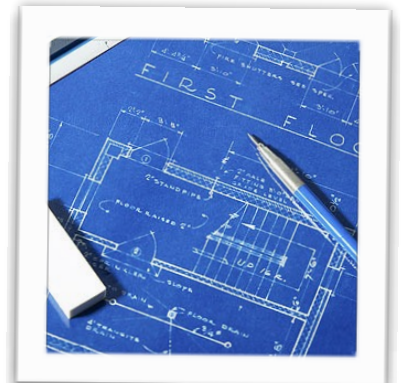
# WHAT IS CHURCH?

## *'God's Blueprint for Missional Church'*

### What is Church?

Discussion: Is Church a Place, a People or a Purpose?

- What is Community? A place, a people or a purpose (2 out of 3)
- What is Riverside Church? A place, a people or a purpose
- We are Riverside Church – We are a Community of Faith



### Blueprint of the Early Church?

Background: The Life, Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ

- Disciples: Followers of Jesus Christ (Not yet Christians)

Acts 2:42-47 The Fellowship of the Believers: They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Continued(Purpose) – Committed(Place) – Communed(People)

1. Teaching – Word of God (Jesus' Words)
2. Fellowship – Gathering Together
3. Communion - (Commonality) - Eating
4. Prayer – Talking and Listening to God/Holy Spirit
5. Worship - Everyone was filled with awe/glad and sincere hearts, praising God
6. Holy Spirit – Wonders and Miraculous Signs
7. Sharing – Going, Telling, Giving, Serving

Teaching + Fellowship + Communion + Prayer + Worship + Holy Spirit + Sharing = Growth

The Blueprint connects People to a Purpose in a Place = Community of Faith

## Church: Place where God meets His People

- Love God – Love People

Exodus 25:8-9,40 “Then have them make a sanctuary for me, and I will dwell among them. Make this tabernacle and all its furnishings exactly like the pattern I will show you. (v40) See that you make them according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.

- 'Build according to the pattern'

## God is the Architect



Hebrews 11:10 For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God. (Abraham)

Hebrews 3:1-6 Jesus Greater Than Moses

Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess. He was faithful to the one who appointed him, just as Moses was faithful in all God's house. Jesus has been found worthy of greater honour than Moses, just as the builder of a house has greater honour than the house itself. For every house is built by someone, but God is the builder of

everything. Moses was faithful as a servant in all God's house, testifying to what would be said in the future. But Christ is faithful as a son over God's house. And we are his house, if we hold on to our courage and the hope of which we boast.

- Church is the House of God (Purpose: The Place where People Meet God)
- The Highest Honour is God's (Worship, Prayers, Studying, Sharing)

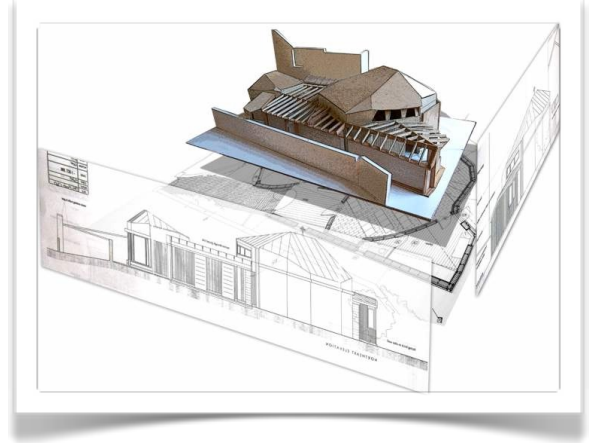
Hebrews 1:10 “In the beginning, O Lord, you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands.

Acts 7:48-49 “However, the Most High does not live in houses made by men. As the prophet says: “ ‘Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. What kind of house will you build for me? says the Lord. Or where will my resting place be?

- Do we reserve the Highest Honour for God in our Community of Faith?

# Christ is the Cornerstone (Foundation)

Ephesians 2:19-22 Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.



- Large Cornerstone at the base of any building,
- Due to its sheer size it was able to bear the weight of the house/building. (Tested for faults)
- Significance of Foundational Strength

Ephesians 2:21-22 In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

1 Peter 2:4-8 You are coming to Christ, who is the living cornerstone of God's temple. He was rejected by people, but he was chosen by God for great honor. And you are living stones that God is building into his spiritual temple. What's more, you are his holy priests. Through the mediation of Jesus Christ, you offer spiritual sacrifices that please God. As the Scriptures say, "I am placing a cornerstone in Jerusalem, chosen for great honor,

and anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced." Yes, you who trust him recognize the honor God has given him. But for those who reject him, "The stone that the builders rejected has now become the cornerstone." And, "He is the stone that makes people stumble, the rock that makes them fall." They stumble because they do not obey God's word, and so they meet the fate that was planned for them.

- A Combination of 3 OT Scriptures (Isaiah 8:14 'Rock of Stumbling and Offense', Isaiah 28:10 'Foundation stone of Zion, a tried stone a precious cornerstone and a sure foundation' and Psa 118:22 'The stone which the builders rejected has become the Chief Cornerstone')
- Referenced by Peter in Acts 4:11 on the Day of Pentecost and by Jesus in Matt 22:42 (Parable of the Tenant farmers) 'Fall on it you will be broken, BUT if it falls on you, you will be crushed' Illustration: Masons (Submission/Justice)

2 Timothy 2:19 Nevertheless, God's solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription: "The Lord knows those who are his," and, "Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness. "

- Inscriptions, Time Capsules, Sacrifices (Blood, Wine, Grain or Oil)

1 Corinthians 3:11 For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.

1 Timothy 3:15 if I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth.

Matthew 7:24-25 The Wise and Foolish Builders

“Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.

Matthew 16:15-19 “But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?” Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven. And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”

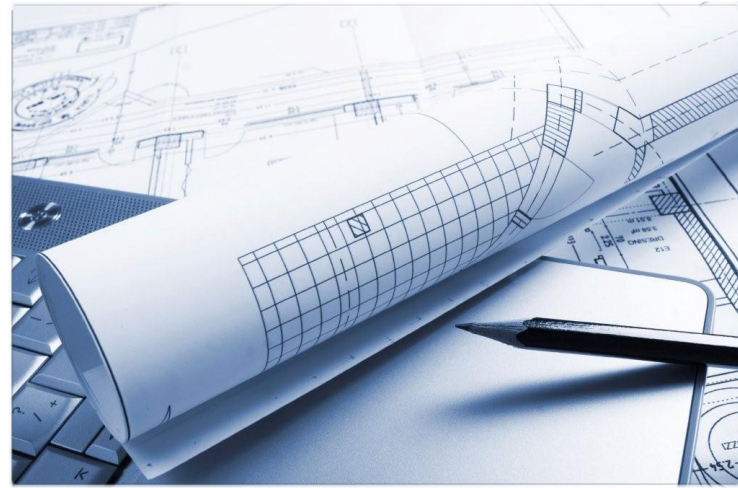
## We are the House of God

1 Corinthians 3:9-17 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building. By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an expert builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should be careful how he builds. For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames. Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him; for God's temple is sacred, and you are that temple.



# Missional Church:

Mission is at the very heart of the Godhead. God so loved the world that he gave his only son (John 3:16), and as the Father sent the Son, he now sends us (John 20:21). We, the body of Christ, are ambassadors for the Kingdom of God, joining God in his mission to reach a world that so desperately needs to hear the Good News.



We see throughout scripture that God is on mission. God is a sending God. He took the initiative to pursue us, coming into our world, seeking, wooing, calling and restoring. It was the Father who sent the Son, and the Father and Son that sent the Spirit.

Missional communities are patterned on the principle of going, so they meet where life happens. They are families of God's people, centered on Jesus, sharing life together, and intentionally reaching out with the Good News of the Kingdom.

Missional communities are a sent people who connect with God, do life together and receive power from the Holy Spirit to partner with God to accomplish his purposes in our neighborhoods and in the world. Jesus said, "As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." And then he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit."

Blueprint: Time with God - Time with Followers - Time with those who don't know Jesus Yet?

## What is Church? A Missional Community

1. Divine Truth—the presence of the Spirit of Jesus and His Word
2. Nurturing Relationships—the many one anothers found in the NT
3. Apostolic Mission—being sent ones, individually and as a community.

The Blueprint connects People to a Purpose in a Place: Acts 2:42 (Teaching + Fellowship + Communion + Prayer + Worship + Holy Spirit + Sharing = Growth)

