

Who is Hope Community Church Downtown? Part 2 (1/9/22)

Sermon Description: Who is Hope Community Church Downtown [today](#)? Last week we considered – Gospel, Community, Mission – what we called the “Good Bones” or the foundational aspects of our community. This week we’ll look at nine aspects that speak to how we as Hope Community Church Downtown might uniquely come together and be sent out.

Main Passage: 1 Corinthians 15:1-5

Title: Who is Hope Community Church Downtown [today](#)? Part 2

Topics: Church

Tags: church, gospel, community, mission

Questions to consider:

- Which one of the nine aspects referenced today most resonates with you?
 - What is one step you could take in response to today’s message because you are a part of what makes Hope *Hope*?
-

Introduction: 2021 year-end giving

Who is Hope Community Church Downtown?

The analogy of a house.

- Last week: The bones. Gospel – Community – Mission
- This week: The decorative. 9 aspects of HCC Downtown for 2022.

The 9 aspects aren’t intended to necessarily impress. They aren’t intended to induce pride, as though we’re the only ones doing these things. They are simply intended to identify who we are and, by God’s grace, more of who we intend to become this year.

1. Keep the main thing the main thing

1 Corinthians 15:1–5

¹Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. ²By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. ³For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, ⁵and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve.

Quoted pastor: Everyone has created their own campfire.

This quote was emblematic of all of the pastors I interviewed for my doctoral work. Each of them sees increased willingness to displace the gospel as the main thing. And in the place of the gospel to put any of a number of other ideologies at the center. HCC DT must heed their warnings and fully embrace Keller's opinion below.

Tim Keller: Because the gospel is endlessly rich, it can handle the burden of being the one "main thing" of a church.

2. Keep raising up leaders

Acts 6:1–7

¹In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Hellenistic Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. ²So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. ³Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them ⁴and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word." ⁵This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. ⁶They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them. ⁷So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith.

HCC DT has done this and will continue to do this. Sometimes it might go by a different name – discipleship, mentorship, stewardship, bible study, etc. – but all these efforts aim at growth. They aim to take people one more step in their spiritual journey.

Leadership Development Institute is one of the vehicles to this end. Thought it we offer classes, seminars, retreats, and various studies to help people grow. Some will even join are staff as part of an internship.

3. Keep starting new churches

Acts 14:21–23

²¹They preached the gospel in that city and won a large number of disciples. Then they returned to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch, ²²strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. "We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God," they said. ²³Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust.

HCC DT has helped start 11 churches. By God's grace, we pray for 11 more! It's not about us. It's about the name of Jesus being more widely known. And one of the greatest, if not greatest, strategies to achieve this is starting new churches.

4. Seek the welfare of the city

Jeremiah 29:4–7

⁴This is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says to all those I carried into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: ⁵“Build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce. ⁶Marry and have sons and daughters; find wives for your sons and give your daughters in marriage, so that they too may have sons and daughters. Increase in number there; do not decrease. ⁷Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.”

HCC DT has 10 urban partner ministries. 10 different ways that you might engage the city. 10 opportunities for you to join those who are already making a difference. They’ve done the difficult work of exegeting the culture, assessing needs, setting up ministries, and making opportunities available. Come join them and us in seeking the welfare of our city!

5. Seek to be bridge-builders!

John 4:4–10

⁴Now he had to go through Samaria. ⁵So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. ⁶Jacob’s well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon. ⁷When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, “Will you give me a drink?” ⁸(His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.) ⁹The Samaritan woman said to him, “You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?” (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.) ¹⁰Jesus answered her, “If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.”

Jesus overcame no less than three significant barriers in this interaction – gender, racial, and religious. The same will be needed from the church.

Within HCC DT, a new ministry called YAM – Young Adult Ministry – have built a bridge. They saw a need within our church family. They approached leadership. They casted vision. They put in work. And now they have built a bridge to a new area of ministry, filling this need within our community.

Gospel and Race. We’ve been walking on this road as a church community since at least 2014. In the last year, it’s become a part of my job description. We have dedicated moneys for this. There will be a 6-week small group series put out this Spring. We’re hosting an event mid-March. We want to be a bridge-building community.

Each of us has the capacity to be bridge-builders. One pastor shared that the entirety of his church was impacted by a couple of bridge-builders. “Some (older) women got to know some younger women and the younger women invited (the older women) to start mentoring them.”

Consider this list assembled by elders and staff bridge-building habits:

- Finds ways to humanize the “other”
- Don’t create false narratives.

- See potential in others.
- Give others the benefit of the doubt.
- Seeks others out, don't wait for people to come to you.
- Give of time and heart.
- Slow to criticize. Quick to be curious and ask questions.
- Connecting people with others at church
- Someone who listens, makes time for others
- Someone who does research and connects with other cultures, etc. and shares that learning and makes connections for others
- Willingness to set aside preferences for the sake of the gospel
- Willingness to be uncomfortable and be inconvenienced
- Remembering people are made in the image of God
- Engage with people who are different from us
- Expect some conflict (*know you are responsible for your response in conflict)
- Be involved.
- Be outward-focused.
- Make personal invitations.
- Ask questions to help others understand what they really want and possibly challenge elements that are unhealthy of what they say they want
- Encourage people to take initiative if they desire something that doesn't exist (e.g. YAM)

6. Seek to be healthy leaders

Galatians 2:11–14

¹¹When Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. ¹²For before certain men came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But when they arrived, he began to draw back and separate himself from the Gentiles because he was afraid of those who belonged to the circumcision group. ¹³The other Jews joined him in his hypocrisy, so that by their hypocrisy even Barnabas was led astray. ¹⁴When I saw that they were not acting in line with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas in front of them all, “You are a Jew, yet you live like a Gentile and not like a Jew. How is it, then, that you force Gentiles to follow Jewish customs?”

Given the reality of leadership failures in the church which are as old as time itself (incl. Rise and Fall of Mars Hill podcast), we must seek to be healthy leaders. It matters. It's worth the effort. “Lord, help our actions and lives to be in line with the truth of the gospel!”

Quoted pastor: “One of my axioms is a united board is a united church and a divided board is a divided church. Two of my dear friends, long time ministers of the gospel, have just been excused from their churches because of a divided board situation.”

7. Engage with the church

1 Corinthians 12:27

²⁷Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

There is a temptation to believe that HCC DT is a great church...it just isn't aimed at you. It's not intended for you. Or so it's believed. Isn't interesting that the apostle Paul, in writing to the church in Corinth, dispels this line of thinking. "Each one of you (or of us!) is a part of it." Because you respond "yes" to Jesus, you're a part of his church. And as soon as you walk through that door, you're a part of our church!

8. Engage with culture

Acts 17:16–18

¹⁶While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols. ¹⁷So he reasoned in the synagogue with both Jews and God-fearing Greeks, as well as in the marketplace day by day with those who happened to be there. ¹⁸A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers began to debate with him. Some of them asked, "What is this babbling trying to say?" Others remarked, "He seems to be advocating foreign gods." They said this because Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus and the resurrection.

Tim Keller: The gospel alone can give us the humility ("I have much to learn from the city"), the confidence ("I have much to give to the city"), and the courage ("I have nothing to fear from the city") to do effective ministry honors God and blesses others.

HCC DT attendee: "I appreciate how Hope holds a lot of things in tension."

Another HCC DT attendee: "I like how HCC isn't afraid to talk about hot cultural topics. I think this helps to diffuse some of the divisiveness. Some people will always say it's too much; others will say it's too little. If that happens, you're probably in the right spot."

9. Engage with joy

1 Peter 1:8–9

⁸Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, ⁹for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

Lighten up. Have fun. Enjoy this life God has given you. As Trike likes to quote from the movie *Stripes*, "Lighten up, Francis." Don't let the seriousness of the struggles which surround us rob us of the joy we have in Christ. As two of my son's favorite Youtubers, MoreJStu, say "Laugh Daily!"

As we come to the end of this two-week study, a couple of questions:

- Which one of the nine aspects referenced today most resonates with you?
- What is one step you could take in response to today's message because you are a part of what makes Hope *Hope*?

And a final quote to remind us of God's work in us from a pastor I interviewed: "I always appreciated the apostle Paul's clarity, so wise, when he says I have fought the good fight. Here he is hours away from dying, being beheaded. And he leaves this beautiful word: I fought the good fight. It's a fight but it's a good fight. If the fight becomes bigger than the good it's beyond discouraging. If the good is elevated over against the fight you'll find the hope of the gospel at work in the midst of brokenness and messiness left and right."

Final giving numbers for DT:

	Total December	Total Goal	Amt short	% received
Downtown	\$432,715.60	\$472,851.00	-\$40,135.40	91.51%

Who is Hope Community Church - Downtown?

GOOD BONIES



Gospel

Community

Mission

Keep the main thing the main thing

1 Corinthians 15:1-5

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“Everyone has created their own campfire.”

Because the gospel is endlessly rich, it can handle the burden of being the one “main thing” of a church.

~ Tim Keller. Center Church: Doing Balanced, Gospel-Centered Ministry in Your City. 2012. Page 36.



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LEADERSHIP
DEVELOPMENT
INSTITUTE

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HOPE HAS
PLANTED
11
LOCAL
CHURCHES

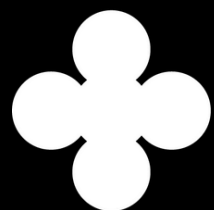
St. Paul Fellowship, 2002
Missio Dei, 2005
Hiawatha Church, 2006
Providence Community Church,
2007
Antioch Church, 2008
Trinity City Church, 2010
Revolution Church, 2013
Grafted Community Church, 2015
Lowertown Location of Hope CC,
2015
Resurrection City Church, 2019
Columbia Heights
Location of Hope CC, 2020

Seek the welfare of the city

Jeremiah 29:4-7

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REDEMPTION OF THE CITY

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Seek to be Bridge-Builders

Gospel and Race

Seek to be Bridge-Builders

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THE
RISE & FALL
OF MARS HILL



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Engage with the Church

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“Roughly, when did you begin to attend Hope?”

- 2006 - 2012 → 22%
- 2013 - 2016 → 44%
- 2017 - 2020 → 34%

What story are we writing together?

What's your role in the ongoing HopeCC story?

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GOOD BONIES



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