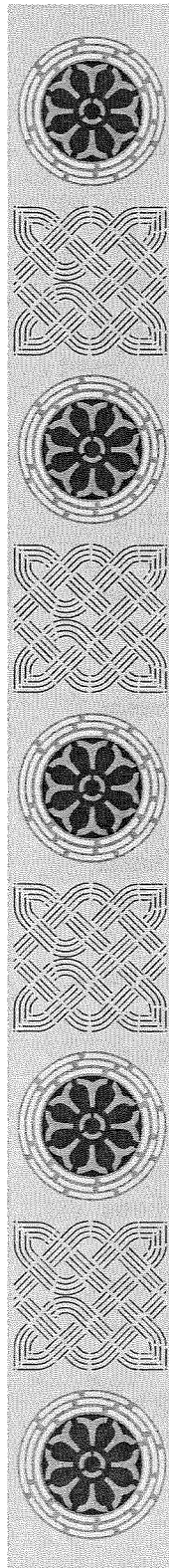


**Tenth**  
Presbyterian  
Church

*17th & Spruce Streets*

*Mailing Address  
1701 Delancey Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19103-6714  
Phone: 215.735.7688  
Fax: 215.735.3960  
Email: [welcometenth.org](mailto:welcometenth.org)  
Web: [www.tenth.org](http://www.tenth.org)*



# Kingdom Discipleship

*Providing Community and Spiritual Care  
at Tenth Presbyterian Church*

*September 2007*

## A Message from the Executive Minister

*“And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers”—*  
Acts 2:42.

How wonderful it must have been to belong to the first Christian church in Jerusalem! The power of the Holy Spirit was fully manifested in the apostles’ ministry. The passage continues: “And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles.” How would you like to have that pastoral staff?

And consider the congregation. “And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need.” They must have had some Benevolence Fund! “And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God...” Now that is community! And the result? “...and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.” This church was definitely advancing the kingdom of God!

We want a church like that, whose leaders are Spirit-filled, whose members gladly share their possessions to help one another, regularly meet together for Bible teaching, prayer, and mutual support, and whose faith and joy in the Lord win their neighbors to the gospel. May the Lord so pour out his Spirit upon us.

But growth also created difficulty even for such a community-minded, Spirit-filled congregation. Acts 6:1 says, “Now

in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution.” The leaders solved the problem, but the situation shows that being goodhearted is not enough. The larger the church, the more intentional it must be in providing structure for oversight and ministry. The apostles could not keep up with all the administrative needs of the church. And even they were guilty of being inwardly focused. It took persecution to scatter the church beyond the boundaries of Jerusalem.

As we know, the kingdom expanded as churches were planted around the Mediterranean. But we also know that every church developed its share of troubles, which the epistles addressed. And so every church in every generation, every people of God in every place, must keep re-hearing and re-applying these teachings of Scripture about community. Every church must be intentional about community and pastoral care if her people are to “grow into a holy temple in the Lord” (Ephesians 2:21) and to have a public testimony of the gospel’s transforming message.

The following material presents the efforts of Tenth Presbyterian Church to provide community and spiritual care. I hope you will see more clearly what is already being done and the plans for the future. In a large church like Tenth, we can see pieces without seeing the whole picture. Take a look at the snapshot as exists now.

For Christ’s kingdom,  
Marion Clark, Executive Minister

## The Mission

In September 2005 the Session decided to undertake a congregation-wide strategic planning process in order to lay the groundwork for the future of the Lord’s work through Tenth in Philadelphia and beyond. This was not done because of any particular perceived problem except the need to understand the Lord’s will regarding the stewardship of the many positive opportunities available to the church.

In the Lord’s providence, the Mission Statement and Generational Imperatives were developed in a collaborative process by Dr. Ryken and the Session in response to the research done by the Strategic Planning Committee. Various members, pastors, staff, ministries, committees, and commissions of Tenth Church provided input. The Statement follows:

### **Mission Statement of Tenth Church**

*Tenth Presbyterian Church is called to glorify the Triune God, to proclaim the gospel of the crucified and risen Christ, and to advance the kingdom that God is building in our city and around the world.*

*By the grace of God, and for the glory of God, Tenth Church is a regional fellowship of kingdom-minded disciples reaching Center City, evangelizing greater Philadelphia, and multiplying gospel ministry to the world through expository preaching, corporate worship, kingdom-centered prayer, small groups, spiritual care, Christian education, missionary work, and mercy ministry.*

***A Fellowship of Kingdom-Minded Disciples.*** *Tenth Church seeks to grow as a God-centered, Spirit-filled fellowship of loving disciples in Christ who apply the gospel to all of life*

*and share a total commitment to advance the kingdom of God in our neighborhood, our city, and our world.*

***Reaching Center City.*** *Tenth Church seeks to be a transforming presence in the heart of Philadelphia by reaching the various communities that live, work, and study in Center City with the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

***Evangelizing Philadelphia.*** *Tenth Church seeks to evangelize greater Philadelphia by supporting city-wide ministries and saturating the city with growing neighborhood churches, in partnership with the Philadelphia Presbytery and other Christians.*

***Multiplying Gospel Ministry to the World.*** *Tenth Church seeks to advance the kingdom of God worldwide by engaging every member in mission, sharing resources for the ministry of Christ in word and deed, and sending workers to partner with other Christians in building the church from Philadelphia to the ends of the earth.*

As good as mission statements may be, the real test is how well it impacts what takes place. This booklet presents the part of the statement about being “A Fellowship of Kingdom-Minded Disciples.” We will consider what is already taking place and then what is being developed.

## Getting Focused

As any trainer knows, it is essential to know the goal for which we are in training. The goal determines how we will train, and more importantly, it helps us keep perspective. The spiritual danger for all churches is to become ingrown, focusing on self-preservation rather than advancing God’s kingdom. By making clear that we are to be focused outward—proclaiming the gospel, advancing the kingdom—we keep the perspective necessary to grow in a healthy, productive manner. Thus, taking the time to recast our mission helps us to build community and train for Christian discipleship.

We will strive to keep the mission in front of us. Our church commissions have been reorganized to reflect the mission statement, enhance cooperation among the many activities and ministries, and keep our goals before us. The presentation of the church budgets is being recast in such a way as to communicate our mission. The mission statement is presented in the membership class, giving attention to each statement. You will see a more conscious effort to keep the mission before us and to connect our activities with its goals.

As noted, this material presents what we are doing in the area of Kingdom Discipleship. For Tenth, we have to start with worship. It is the worship and preaching that occurs week in and week out that is the most important care of all. We may not normally think of worship as a time of pastoral care, but your pastor is feeding you through his preaching. Additionally, the means of grace offered through the administration of the Lord’s Supper is another important form of ministry. Through the pastoral prayer, the pastor is

ministering to you as he lifts you up before God. The very act of corporate worship is the strongest spiritual medicine to be given for any believer who is struggling with faith, especially in services that highlight the gospel every Sunday.

There are other forms of ministry to God's people as well. Here is an overview of what is taking place at Tenth.

## Continuing Ministry to the Congregation

### **Parish System**

The parish system is the structure for pastoral oversight of resident church members. The six parishes are led by one or two Parish Elders responsible for the members residing in their districts. You may call on your Parish Elder for prayer, biblical counsel, and other support you may need. The parishes also encourage community by sponsoring parish-wide activities and providing small groups. Parish councils, made up of church officers and leaders, meet monthly to discuss parish matters and to work together to minister to their parish community.

### **Pastoral Care by the Elders**

The elders are the shepherds of God's flock. (Note, the term "elders" also includes the ordained pastors who are regarded as "teaching elders.") Every elder's priority is to give personal attention to the church's members through prayer and ministering God's Word. Tenth members may seek such pastoral care from *any* elder. Are you sick or struggling through a particularly difficult time and do you want elders to anoint with oil, lay hands and pray over you (James 5:14)? Elders routinely meet between morning services for such

prayer. Just let an elder know. If you cannot leave home, arrangements will be made to visit.

If you call in to the church weekdays, a pastor or pastoral staff person will be available to take your call. The pastoral staff are assigned days to be the Pastor of the Day for this purpose. If you are in the hospital, arrangements will be made to receive a visit from an elder or pastoral staff person.

### **Diaconal Care**

The Diaconate provides practical help to many church members. They help members work through practical problems affecting their health and livelihood, as well as provide benevolence assistance. Medical bills have been met, rent and utility bills paid, groceries provided, and unexpected bills resolved. The first step for you is to speak to a deacon or deaconess about a particular need you are facing.

### **Small Groups**

Small groups have long been an emphasis at Tenth because they provide the personal community support all Christians need. They provide interactive study of Scripture, mutual prayer support, and very often become the primary spiritual support system for the participants. We would like to see the number of small groups grow in the coming year. Already training classes for leading small groups have been taking place. Those will continue. Cora Hogue coordinates the small group system. Contact her if you are looking for a group. Each parish also has a Small Group Coordinator who can connect you.

### **Bible School Education**

Bible school education for our children has an enduring and

strong foundation upon which it continues to build. Our children receive systematic teaching through the Scriptures, and they memorize Scripture, our catechisms, and hymns of the church. One recent note from a parent illustrates the effect of such teaching. "My daughter spent most of the week at Camp Sankanac answering questions [of another friend inquiring about the faith and who made a commitment to Christ]. Thank the Lord she has had an excellent Sunday School for the last 16 years. Now [my daughter] is motivated to learn even more and know more about God."

Bible school education extends to our adults as well. The classes allow for in-depth study of Scripture, theology, and Christian living. They complement the pulpit preaching by providing further investigation into Scripture and addressing a variety of topics. Some long-standing classes, such as the Young Married class, have also provided strong community support.

## New Ministry Initiatives to the Congregation

In addition to these preexisting forms of ministry to God's people at Tenth, we are planning several new initiatives to address specific needs that arose from the Spiritual Health Survey administered last year. Specifically, the need for better connection among members was identified. Also, those with particular needs expressed the desire for more pastoral care support. Below you will find a brief description of the initiatives you will hear more about in the coming months.

### **Better connect church members to the church body by installing Tenth Community Assistants**

The introduction of Tenth Community Assistants (TCAs)

may well be the most significant new development for enhancing pastoral care and community in the church. The critical factor for both is personal communication. Such communication is also the most challenging task because of the size of membership. TCAs are church members who help form personal links for all members with the church, particularly with their elders. Most TCAs will already have a personal relationship with the ten or so members they contact monthly. All TCAs will have developed relationships with their contacts, so that members are able to 1) relay needs they may have for prayer or practical help and 2) keep in touch with the church community. Our goal is to have a complete network of TCAs in place by the summer of 2008.

### **Improve pastoral care to members by providing more training to officers and by increasing the number of officers available to the congregation**

Elders receive some training for their duties through teaching at Session meetings and informal meetings with pastors. Our goal for the coming year is to develop a systematic means of ongoing training to better equip elders for pastoral ministry. Intentional, ongoing training for the diaconate is also being developed and put into place for 2008. David Apple, Director of Mercy Ministries, has been asked to develop and lead training sessions specifically to equip them in providing diaconal care.

In regard to the diaconate, we are lifting some responsibilities to allow them more time and focus on providing mercy care to the congregation and assisting the congregation in providing mercy ministry. The fellowship committee (responsible for coffee hour, receptions, and church picnic) and the greeting ministry (responsible for providing greeters

for all the services) are now independent ministries. We plan either to remove other duties or add more support for the diaconate in areas like ushering, security, and communion preparation. Besides the help for the diaconate, moving these responsibilities allows for more church members to serve.

Additionally, we will shore up the care given in the parishes by appointing inactive church officers to share the shepherding responsibilities with the Parish Elders. These “inactive” elders and deacons/esses are those not presently serving on their respective boards. They may have rotated off for a period of time or have chosen not to return to active board duty. Nevertheless, they retain their spiritual gifts. We are calling upon them to continue using their gifts for the service of the church in their respective parishes and in carrying out other duties. Non-board elders and deacons/esses can then share the load of pastoral and diaconal care.

Non-board elders may also continue the ministry roles they had while on board. If an elder displays special interest and giftedness in a position—for example trustee—he can continue in that position. The same may be true for a parish elder. This allows for continuity in that position and for a spiritual gift to be applied where most needed. It also frees up the active board elders to spend more time in pastoral care.

### **Build a network of support**

Vital to community are the informal support relationships developed throughout the church. Jerry McFarland has been recruiting and equipping married couples to come alongside other couples in the church. TenthWomen has begun a simi-

lar project—identifying and recruiting women to come alongside others in time of need. These couples and individuals will be resources for the elders, to supplement their care. We will make a similar effort for men as well.

### **Model one-on-one discipleship and purposeful community building through the new Center City Ministry**

The new outreach to Center City that is being developed will lay a foundation of mutual community and spiritual care. Though it does not directly affect other parishes, it nevertheless will strengthen the community and spiritual care for the growing membership in Center City and peripheral areas. Additionally, it will be intentional about modeling the types of support, care, and behaviors we are seeking to promote across the entire church body. We expect the Sunday evening service and the activities following it to provide another outlet for single adult fellowship, considering that over 60% of the Center City population is single.

### **Provide biblical counseling to members with long term, ongoing needs**

The needs of Tenth members are met in a variety of ways through the staff, leaders, and fellow members. At times some needs would be well served through the care of professional counselors. Sometimes pastors and elders are too heavily loaded with pastoral care; sometimes the nature of the need requires expertise that a trained professional can provide. In such times, pastors and elders have referred members to counselors and other professionals in the region and will continue to do so. We are now evaluating a way to provide counseling on-site to better serve Tenth members and, in particular, those who live in the city.

**Provide access to the tools and technologies to facilitate the desired pastoral care goals and objectives**

*More accurate membership records*

Critical to communication are accurate membership records. To maintain good records for a large, transient population, we need a system that provides access to the parishes. We intend to have such a system in place within the first quarter of 2008 that will allow record keepers in each of the parishes to update membership records. The network of TCAs will greatly help with this. With up-to-date information, we can more efficiently communicate with all church members and provide timely spiritual care.

*Continued use of the Internet for communication purposes*

As impersonal as it may sound, technology has already helped church members feel more connected to the church body. The church website ([www.tenth.org](http://www.tenth.org)) is the prime source for accessing both current and archived material. The DMC News blogsite ([www.marionclark.blogspot.com](http://www.marionclark.blogspot.com)) provides daily news about the church community. Webcasting (providing video and/or audio) of worship services, sermons, and Bible school classes not only serves the greater church community throughout the world, but also ministers to our members who are homebound or away temporarily. All of these services can be accessed on the church website.