



## **BE THE CHURCH GUIDE**

**APRIL-JUNE 2023**

# ALL-IN

'Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.' Jesus shares these words with his followers in Matthew 10 in a section of Scripture known as the missionary discourse. He had already told them that the harvest was ripe and that more laborers were needed. Now he was sharing with them one of the big realities of the Kingdom work that he was calling them into. With these words he is basically saying, 'If you live this life for your own gain you will actually miss out on real life. But if you go 'all in' with me, even though it won't always be easy, you will discover a life of real value and worth.'

Today, we are still a sent people called to be doing Kingdom life with Jesus. We know that this MicroChurch journey that God has called Belmont to has come with a lot of change. We know that this metamorphosis has not been easy but God hasn't called us to the easy life. We know that we are missing some familiar faces and that his pruning is sometimes painful. We know that we have been through a refining fire but God does some of his best work out of the ashes. As history has shown us, God can do a whole lot through a handful of people who are 'all in' for Jesus!

We are still 100% confident that Belmont is on the path that the Lord has called us to and we want you to know that we are 'all in' to see this thing through. We are encouraged when we think about this congregation because what we see here is a group of folks who treat each other as family and who are 'all in' to being the church in a different and meaningful way here in Roanoke.

It is true that God has been taking our church, and each one of us individually, through some uncomfortable changes to reshape who we are and how we live life as Christians and missionaries in our city. You have surely felt this happening inside of you. It is not always pleasant but it is absolutely necessary because we cannot give to others what we ourselves do not have. Each one of us must become the kind of people and disciples that we are hoping to replicate.



One result of this change and growth is that God will use us to be witnesses to our unbelieving friends and neighbors. Another outcome is that we will get to lead the way for other believers in Roanoke who are dissatisfied with how they are living and feeling the tug to something more; a more meaningful Kingdom life with Jesus. This metamorphosis is a struggle but there is transformation on the other side! Thank you for being 'all in' with us. It's a different way of seeing and being the church but the journey is going to be enriching as we all pull closer to Jesus and hear his voice telling us again, 'Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.'

*- Your Belmont Elders - Jon Laughinghouse and Wes Williams*

# UPDATED RHYTHMS

Every family and organization has rhythms of life that it lives by. As God reshapes our church community into what he wants it to be, we will continue to adjust the rhythms of our shared lives to stay in step with him. Here is an overview of what those changes are for us in the 2nd Quarter.



## MicroChurch

- Our MC gatherings will continue to take place on a weekly basis.
- We are asking everyone to be committed to a specific MC and to be faithful in attending and being involved in the life of that group of people.
- We want to see the people in our MC as our family and pursue a variety of ways of doing life together. Take the initiative and pursue this in the ways that the Holy Spirit brings to mind for you.

## Triads

- A Triad is a group of three men or women from the same MC who meet weekly for about an hour to help each other grow toward spiritual maturity.
- We are asking everyone to pray, plan, and be proactive in talking to other individuals in their MC to get their Triad up and going in the month of April.
- The church is providing a template for how to use your time together in Triad. In addition, we will have a church-wide training about Triads to explain further.

## Church-Wide Gatherings

- We will adjust the regularity of our Sunday evening gatherings to put more time and energy into making MC life and Triads as healthy as possible. Services will be on the first and third Sunday.
- First Sundays of each month will be a celebration service with music, teaching, and testimonies followed by a time of food and fellowship.
- Third Sundays of each month will be a church-wide training that will go over key aspects of MicroChurch life. At the training on April 16 we will unpack the details of this 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Guide, especially in regards to Triads, Missions, and Multiplication.

# MICROCHURCH

MicroChurch is central to life at Belmont. These are small, fully functioning, neighborhood churches that are doing their best to live life as family and as missionaries sent by Jesus. They meet on a weekly basis and use our Believe, Belong, Become framework to guide their time together. MC's are continuing to study the book of Matthew this quarter. We have two exciting MC's to choose from right now and more are on the way!



## **Williams MicroChurch**

Wes Williams is the Shepherd of this MC. He and Whittney minister to this church family with the help of their co-leaders, Tim and Rene Ward and CP and Kim Brown. Their weekly gathering is on Thursdays evenings at 6:30pm.



## **Laughinghouse MicroChurch**

Jon Laughinghouse is the Shepherd of this MC. He and Kristi lead this church family with the help of their co-leaders Keegan and Carissa Divant. Their weekly gathering is on Sunday mornings at 9am.

# TRIADS



Triads are a foundational component for intentional spiritual growth at Belmont. This is a group of three men or women from the same MC who meet weekly for about an hour to help each other grow toward spiritual maturity. Our Triads use the Believe, Belong, Become framework to keep their time together balanced and meaningful. This simplicity helps to reproduce disciples who can in turn reproduce others. Triads open and close their time together in prayer. Below are the three components of a normal Triad conversation and examples of questions to ask:

**BELIEVE** - We embrace our identity as disciples [learners] of Jesus. During this time we share the spiritual practices that we have been observing in our pursuit of Jesus and we also share what the Lord has been teaching us. Questions to ask in this segment of the conversation will be:

- What spiritual practices have you been observing this past week?
- What have you been hearing or learning from the Lord?
- What spiritual rhythms do you need to be focused on this coming week?

**BELONG** - We embrace our identity as members of the Father's family. Because of this, we are transparent with our struggles, we ask for accountability, and we are supported by others in the Triad. Questions to ask in this part of the convo are:

- How do you need to grow as a husband, wife, dad, mom, etc.. in your family this week? How have you been developing as a member of your church family?
- Have you fallen into sin this past week? [Have you spoken poorly about/to another person, given in to addictive behavior, had inappropriate sexual thoughts or actions, had a sinful attitude like anger or jealousy?]
- What specific area of struggle will you seek victory in this week? How?

**BECOME** - We embrace our identity of Spirit-empowered missionaries. Because we are a sent people we will ask the Lord who he is calling us to and to take steps each week to build relationships and share the gospel with unbelievers. Questions include:

- Who are the specific people in your life that God is calling you to minister to and share with?
- Have you been praying for these people on a regular basis? What steps have you taken to engage with them this past week? How did that go?
- What steps will you take this coming week to be salt and light to unbelieving neighbors?

# CHURCH-WIDE GATHERINGS

The gathering of the entire church is a valuable component of our life together as God’s family. This quarter of the year we are modifying the regularity and purpose of our Sunday evening gatherings.



## Regularity

During the months of April, May, and June we will only have Sunday evening service on the first and third Sunday of each month. These will continue to be held at Crystal Spring Baptist Church at 5pm and children’s ministry will be available for kids in the 0-5yr old age range.

We are taking this step in order to reallocate some of our time and energy. We want to spend more intentional time with our neighbors. We want to push into doing life in a greater way with the people in our MicroChurch. We want to get Triads up and going so that everyone is truly known and has a plan for intentional spiritual growth. We need to make space for training up leaders and coaching more people up to live on mission with Jesus.

## Purpose

The First Sunday of each month will be our Celebration Service. This will have components of a traditional worship service such as music and teaching and will also have testimonies from each MC celebrating how the Lord is working. This service will be a great entry point into the life of the church for new people so invite your friends and also plan to make this service a priority for family.



The Third Sunday of each month will be our Training Service. This time together will not have the traditional sermon and music but instead will focus on key areas of MC life that we all need to grow in and be on the same page about. This is vital to keep our Network healthy and growing and to keep all of us equipped to do the work that the Lord is calling us to.

## Sunday Evening Schedule

SUNDAY	SERVICE AT 5PM	DETAILS
April 2	Celebration Service	Fellowship after service
April 16	Training Service	Teen Fellowship after service
May 7	Celebration Service	Food/fellowship after service
May 21	Training Service	Teen Fellowship after service
June 4	Celebration Service	Food/fellowship after service
June 18	Training Service	Teen Fellowship after service

# MULTIPLYING MC'S

We understand that our current MC's are already pretty full. That's a good problem to have! We are giving a lot of prayer and thought to how we will multiply our MC's and reach more people for Christ in a healthy way. Here is an overview of that process.

## Vision

- We have a vision for raising up 100 healthy MC's over the next 10 years so that 1,000 of our neighbors hear about Jesus in a personal way from a friend.
- To accomplish this vision means that we need to start slowly and intentionally so that we lay a healthy foundation for the future.
- At the end of three years we may have only multiplied to 4 or 5 MC's. That's okay! If the Lord sees fit to bless this venture, the exponential growth would really happen in years 9 or 10.

## Mission

- Planting additional healthy MC's means that we will make it our mission to train, equip, and resource leaders and co-leaders in a simple, reproducible way.
- We are working to firm up and roll out our MC Leader Training Program so that we can take our first generation of leaders and co-leaders through it.
- The goal is to prepare folks to lead or help with the formation of a new MC. We will depend upon the guidance of the Spirit for the timing of each new launch. When the time and the team is right, they will be commissioned, celebrated, and supported by the church for this new work.

## Safeguards

- We know that planting new MC's has the potential to open us up to risks and that we will need to be 'as wise as serpents and innocent as doves'. We are working toward a new level of discernment.
- Proven MC Pastors will play a significant role in determining whether or not leaders that have gone through the training have the calling, character, and capacity to lead an MC at that time. We also plan to have automated accountability procedures in place for our MicroChurch leaders, co-leaders, and childcare workers so that accountability is part of our culture from the start.
- One example of this is an automated, monthly questionnaire sent to MC leaders and co-leaders. This will have specific questions about how they are walking with the Lord and how they are ministering to their people. This information will give the Elders line of sight on how things are going and serve as a growth tool for the leaders.

# LEADERSHIP

We are going through some changes as a church but biblical leadership will always remain a key component of healthy life together. God has blessed us with gifted and godly folks who have a heart to shepherd his people.

## Elders

The Council of Elders gives vision, direction, teaching, and stability to the church family. We currently have two Elders in Pastor Jon and Wes Williams. However, we are in a unique situation since Wes is set to cycle off of the Council at the end of June. To address this situation, while we are in the process of raising up new Elders for 2024, we will have two pastors from sister congregations serve as outside, ad-hoc Elders. They will do this for one year, starting on July 1, to give Pastor Jon trusted advisers, a sounding board, and healthy accountability with some Elder-qualified men. They won't have voting rights on the Council; instead their role will be advisory and pastoral in nature. This will also give members at Belmont peace of mind and additional options for pastoral leadership questions should they arise. These men are Pastor Pete Schemm from Cave Spring Baptist Church and Pastor Charles Wilson from The Hill Church. In addition to this, we will invite the men who lead and co-lead our current MC's to participate in our monthly Elders meetings for the remainder of 2023. This will give some healthy input and accountability from within our own congregation and will also serve as a training pipeline for new Elders. In addition to Pastor Jon and Wes Williams, the people invited to participate in these meetings will be Tim Ward, CP Brown, and Keegan Divant. The Council of Elders usually meets on the first Monday evening of each month.

## Deacons

We have been blessed with a godly team of Deacons here at Belmont. As a reminder, our current Deacons are Tim and Rene Ward, Jim Howell, Liz Hogan, Matt and Kacey Bowman, Rick and Sherri St. Pierre, and Keegan and Carissa Divant. Here is a highlight of two of our Deacons:

- Rick St. Pierre serves as the Church Treasurer and ensures that the finances of the church are in order.
- Jim Howell, along with his wife Carol, have a special ministry to the Legacy Members of Belmont. They minister to them through phone calls, visits, cards and many other ways. Lelia Jones is also invaluable in this ministry of caring for our legacy members.

The Deacons meet once a quarter in conjunction with one of the New Wine Team meetings.





# LEADERSHIP CONT.



## Staff

Rene Ward and Carissa Divant serve with Pastor Jon in a part-time capacity. The work that they do for the church in the areas of children’s ministry, administration, communication, maintaining our app and our digital presence online, and much more is vitally important. These roles are evolving as we move forward into MicroChurch life and these ladies have stayed flexible and maintained a positive outlook on the journey even in the face of uncertainty.

## New Wine Team

The New Wine Team consists of the leaders and co-leaders of each of our current MC’s. They meet together on a monthly basis to evaluate how things are going, to plan for how to move forward in MC life, and to receive coaching.

Leadership Meeting Calendar	
Date	Team
April 3   7pm	New Wine + Deacons
April 17   7pm	Elders
May 1   7pm	Elders
May 15   7pm	New Wine Team
June 5   7pm	Elders
June 19   7pm	New Wine Team
Staff Meetings happen every Tuesday afternoon.	

# MISSIONS

As we embrace a different way of seeing and being the church we are asking the Lord to give us eyes for the harvest that he is calling us to. This involves embracing our identity as missionaries who are sent and empowered by the Holy Spirit. Here are three categories that will help us in our thinking.



## Our Neighbors

- Pray and then make a list of the neighbors that the Lord is calling you to minister to. This could be folks who live on your street but might also be a person at work, at school, at the gym, or some other place you frequent.
- Pray for these neighbors on a daily basis. Write down the ideas that the Lord brings to mind for how you can show them the love of Jesus. Put it on the calendar and then do it!
- Share your calling and the names of these neighbors with people in your Triad, MC, and family and ask them to pray with you and to push you if needed.

## Our MC's

- 'Is there a mission opportunity that the Lord is calling us to as an MC?' This is a question that each MC should be wrestling with and praying about this quarter.
- In addition to the neighbors that God is sending each of us to individually, he may have something that he wants your MC to engage in as a group.
- Think about a mission's opportunity that would be a fit for your MC and that would also be sustainable and truly helpful for a long period of time.



## Our Network

Belmont is kind of unique in the MicroChurch space in that we work together as a network to support Kingdom work in many ways; locally, nationally, and globally.

- Locally - We give financial support and/or relational, hands-on help to The Hill Church, Blue Ridge Women's Center, The Least of These, Care Portal, etc...
- Nationally - We are the official sending church for Christ Central Church in Pittsburgh. We support them through coaching, finances, and serve teams.
- Globally - We give cooperatively, with many other churches, to train and support missionaries who are taking the gospel to every nation, tribe, people, and language in the world.

# PITTSBURGH MISSION TRIP



Our mission trip March 17-19, to Christ Central Church in Pittsburgh was a blessing. Eight adults along with 9 kids and teens from Belmont were able to go. There was also a group of about ten from The Hill Church here in Roanoke that went. We were able to spend a good amount of time with church-planters, Reggie and Courtney Johnson, and be an encouragement to them.

We also were able to see first-hand the ministry that they have been doing in Pittsburgh, do some work on the church building that was recently gifted to them, and get ideas for projects that we could help them with in a return mission trip this summer. We also participated in their launch service, met people from the neighborhood around the building, and had a good time of fellowship afterward.



# FAMILY MINISTRY

We partner with parents to see kids and teens disciplined at Home, at MicroChurch, and at the Network level.

For the Home level, we provide families with simple to use resources like Bible stories, prayers, scripture memory and neighborhood mission challenges to use in discipling their kids and teens.

At the MC level, kids and families have the opportunity to participate in church together at a smaller scale. There is teaching and childcare available for younger kids. Teens are able to participate fully in the MC gathering time and we are working to connect teens to their own weekly Triads.

At the Network level, we will provide learning opportunities for Preschool children twice a month and K-5th once a month during our Sunday services. For teens, we are providing opportunities to serve on Sunday evenings during services and then a fun fellowship time together on the third Sunday of each month. We will continue to provide family mission trip opportunities like our trip to Pittsburgh.



## BE A FINANCIAL PARTNER

Your faithful giving supports the ministry here at Belmont. We support not only the ministry to our own church family but we give financially to two church plants, support global missions, local outreaches to the homeless, and women who find themselves in an unplanned pregnancy. These are just a few of the things that you support every time you give to the work here at Belmont. You can give securely through our app, on our website, or through a check dropped in the Connection Card box. Pray about what percentage of your income the Lord would have you give and give that amount faithfully. You will be surprised how the Lord blesses you through this!



***Thanks for being ALL IN with us!***

If you have any questions about what you read, feel free to contact Jon or Wes.

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