



OUR STORY 2007-2017

The following document is a rough copy of Pastor Drost's sermon notes
of his message, preached September 24th, 2017

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I call this my **HIT** passage... 1 Corinthians 9:19-27

¹⁹ Though I am free from all, I have made myself a slave to all, that I might **win** the more. ²⁰ And to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might **win** Jews; to those who are under the Law, as under the Law, though not being myself under the Law, that I might **win** those who are under the Law; ²¹ to those who are without law, as without law, though not being without the law of God but under the law of Christ, that I might **win** those who are without law. ²² To the weak I became weak, that I might **win** the weak; I have become all things to all that I may by all means save some. ²³ And I do all things for the sake of the gospel, that I may become a fellow partaker of it. ²⁴ Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may **win**. ²⁵ And everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. ²⁶ Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; **I box in such a way, as not beating the air.** 1 Cor. 9:19-26 (NASB)

September 23, 2007 was a very key Sunday for our church.

- I had just turned 51 that day.
- I had been the Senior Pastor at that time for 20 years.
- We were celebrating our 25th year as Smythe Street Cathedral.
- We had spent a lot of time searching our hearts for what was NEXT and **I presented our 10 year vision for Smythe Street Cathedral.**
- I remember we placed a huge sail on stage (Went right to the ceiling).
- We used sailing language like: “setting the sails”. Our values were called “cardinal buoys”. When sailing, buoys are what keep you in the right water channel.
- **We divided our vision into 4 quadrants**

4 main focal points with 4 key images:

- 1) Fishing net - **Effective Evangelism** Jesus saw two fishermen, Peter and Andrew casting a net into the sea and He said to them,

“Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.” Mat. 4:18–19 (NKJV)

“Jesus came to seek and to save the lost.” Luke 19:10

Lost people matter to God, and therefore, must matter to us.

We would aim for all ages, all cultures, and all socio-economic levels (**Everybody matters!**)

- 2) Tool belt - **Practical Care for the Needy**

Getting involved in practical ways as a church to care for the needs in our local community and our world. Taking seriously the words of Christ:

“I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, thirsty and you gave me something to drink, a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you visited me.” Matthew 25:35-36

- 3) Fire pit - **Building a Sense of Community**

Just like logs burn hotter when they burn together, we grow stronger in our faith when we are connected and committed to each other.



4) Coach - **Empowering Believers**

“Christ gave some to be apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers to prepare God's people for the work of ministry, so that the body of Christ may be built up.” Ephesians 4:11-12

As pastors and spiritual leaders our job is to develop other believers to discover their area of ministry and service to God. It's about mentorship and developing leaders.

That was our vision: 4 key focal points:

- The Great **COMMISSION** to evangelism
- **COMPASSION** and Care for the needs of the world
- Building a sense of **COMMUNITY**
- **COACHING** and the development of people's ministry and leadership skills

And everything got filtered through that vision! Our **time, efforts, prayers, finances, focus.**

You see, Paul said...

I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air. 1 Corinthians 9:25-26 (NASB)

- If you're out for a leisurely drive on a Sunday afternoon, **any road will take you!** No need for a GPS! But if you are aiming for a particular destination, you might want to plug into your GPS the proper city, street and street number!
- So we took aim with **intentionality** and focus.
- **I remember the first year preaching a sermon called “HIT”.**
I used the analogy of a boxer and for months this passage became my focus... I read it daily!

Run in such a way that you may win! Run in such a way, as not without aim.

Box in such a way, as not beating the air.

God calls us to **WIN!** He calls us to **HIT** a target, His target!

That takes **intentionality**, saying “no” to the things that, while maybe they may be “good things”, they were not what we needed to be about or what we were called to focus on.

- It also demanded from us the need to **take risks** and step out in faith in areas we felt called to do.

Not sure how many remember a sermon I preached called: **TIME TO TAKE A RISK**

...we had a diving board off the front of the platform

...to Risk is to undergo an action even when you are not sure of the outcome!

Over the past 10 years we took several risks

Examples:

- We took a big risk when we brought this guy called Tony Curtis! We prayed about it and took a step of faith. We did not have the money or the budget but we did it! And out of that we have seen the Student Ministry that we have and the great students serving the Lord with excellence and passion.
- We took a big risk in 2009 when we felt the need to really put extra focus on our Kids and Family Ministries Department. But we worked hard and built a great team upstairs of 80 to



100 volunteers. Then a variety of other family programs emerged allowing us to minister to over 1000 different children in the last 8 years with records numbers, not only upstairs on Sundays, but also in Summer Camps, VBS and Camp lead.

And **we took a big step of faith bringing on Heidi Billington as our full-time Family Ministries Leader!**

- Plus we took on Cheri Newman as a full time Administrative Assistant. And every time we did it seemed impossible but we took the risk and did it.
- I remember when the FreddyLink idea was birthed...

We wanted to make a strategic difference in an area of the world that would be measurable and lasting. So we launched FreddyLink with a focus on Haiti. It was a huge risk and a huge step of faith. **Remember the earthquake? Our team was there!**

God helped us and 470 kids got sponsored = over \$1.6 million

✚ So, here we are... 10 years later! This is our story...

4 Quadrants: Commission, Compassion, Community and Coaching

- The Great **COMMISSION** to evangelism – **ANY WINS?**
 - Outside of the hundreds of youth and kids we have touched we also had about 1000 people who took Alpha and Alpha ESL
 - Many of those also took our Discipleship Course
 - We had 238 baptisms
 - We were very intentional about touching the multicultural population of our city (We now have a Swahili service)
- **COMPASSION** and Care for the needs of the world
 - Our church has really come alive with the idea of being a caring church. Not only caring for the People of Haiti but also caring for the needs our local community!
 - About 4,500 times over the past 10 years a family or individual has been the recipient of care through the SSC family (monthly food help, the SUN Committee, Helping Hands, helping refugees and our Christmas Hampers.)
 - Not only have we continued to minister and support prison ministries, recovery ministries like Village of Hope, but we also took on new missionaries like two missionary couples in Turkey and the Eagars with MAF.
- Building a sense of **COMMUNITY**
 - We launched the vision of Community Groups and Circle Groups. We believe that we grow stronger and deeper when we are face to face in smaller circles beyond our Sunday joint worship times.
 - The Youth Ministry and the Kids ministry are also in smaller circles.
 - Not including great ministries like mom2mom, Overcomers, we have had well over 300 different adults participating in a Community Group or Circle Group.



Let me share one quick story that we got permission to share.

Many of you would know Mike & Trish Bech, a great couple in our church. Trish had been on our prayer chain as she's faced serious surgeries for a brain tumor and other serious health issues. She and Mike were a part of the Community Group that is led by **Peter and Sharon Spacek**.

This past March they faced additional issues with Trish's eyes and with all the doctor's appointments and challenges. They emailed the group saying they were stopping the group because they didn't feel it was fair to the group to attend as sporadically as they had.

Peter replied in an email, here's some of what he said:

"While the group [commitment] talks about committing to regular attendance, it is more about relationship, doing life together and being there when challenges affect our lives. The group should be a source of strength and encouragement in those times, not an additional burden.

"Please know that as a group we are there for you, not just in prayer, but in practical ways as well. We are able to pitch in and help with chores, assist with driving to appointments (including Halifax), take some of the burden off Mike, cook, clean and walk with you through these times. You are not alone in this. We are committed to you. Lean on us when the path becomes too much to walk alone.

*Calling to mind **Ecclesiastes 4:9-12**: Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up. Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.*

"And that is the real purpose of the group, not that we gather weekly for a bible study. Let us help you up, because you are not someone who falls and has no one the help them up."

The Bechs ended up staying with the group and the group rallied around them that spring.

This illustrates why circles matter. The goal is not to have another program in our church, but that we be intentional about doing life together and fostering those community connections as a church. If you're not connected in a group, the fall is a key time to get connected. See Pastor Chad in the back today.

- **COACHING** and the development of people's ministry and leadership skills...
 - We are developing the Next Generation of leaders through ministries like: Worship Academy, Kid Lead Bootcamp, Camp LEAD, developing leaders in Merge.
 - Several leaders getting trained for ministry (This past weekend three of our young leaders got licenced as ministers: Jeremy Kitchen, Jonathan DesRoches, Zach Paget)

I really think that over the past 10 years the Lord has really helped us HIT many (many) excellent WINS!

IT'S BEEN A GREAT RIDE!

✚ At the same time:

- We totally rewrote our church By-Laws to better reflect who we were!



- We made Membership Matter.
- We set up Eldership and expanded our Board of Trustees.
- We renovated most of our building.
- We totally paid of the mortgage and are **debt free for the first time in 35 years!**

✚ But there also have been some huge **DISAPPOINTMENTS**

- People we loved got sick and passed away.
(I think of people like Heidi, Monty, Michele Boyd, Al Ingraham,
Recently Scott Hall, Joan Blakeney)
- Some of you faced some very big health challenges. (Like Trish Bech)
- Some of the wonderful faithful members grew old and left us.
(Some in homes, some passed away: Sterling Hoban, Alma Moore)
- Some walked away from following Jesus. (Some of those were youth, sons and daughters)
- Some **families went through some very difficult challenges**.
- **Some of you felt the pain of a spouse walking away**.
- Some prayer requests have not yet been answered.

But in all these very challenging times we have been able to reach out and take Jesus by the hand and lean on His faithfulness, even through the dark moments.

Jesus never promised us a bed of roses but He did promise us this:

“Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Matthew 28:20b (NKJV)

So, what now? What’s next? What’s our ROAD AHEAD LOOK LIKE? Paul said...

“Forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead,

To reach is to make an effort. An effort forward... but not only forward; upward, notice what else he says...

I press (PRESS) toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 3:13–14 (NKJV)

If September 23rd, 2007 was a key pivotal moment in the history of Smythe Street Cathedral, today (September 24th, 2017) is an even more pivotal moment in the history of our church.

Why?

- It’s not how you start that counts the most; it’s how you finish!
- In 9 years I will be 70. I will need to be passing on the baton to the next generation!
- There are some really important decisions ahead for this church.

So we need to figure out what is next! What does the road ahead look like? Set our GPS and aim for HITS and WINS! **What mountains will this next generation climb?**

And this is my promise:

As long as God gives me the strength, I will be climbing right beside you, dreaming with you, believing with you, crying with you, and laughing and celebrating with you!



So how will we set a course for the next few years?

- In the Old Testament God spoke through one person (the man of God). He would seek God and tell the people: “This is what God is saying”
- In the New Testament God has chosen to fill all believers with His Spirit. No one person has the “Word of the Lord”!
- Yes I am the Head Pastor, but my responsibility is to “Put your ear to the ground, and listen to what God is stirring in the hearts of His people at SSC and what He is stirring in my heart.” There is where the future vision will be, listening to what God is stirring in us as a group of believers!

Here is how we will do this:

1) **Prayer** (Now through February)

We will be asking the church to pray throughout this season.

We will have special times of prayer and fasting as a church.

2) **Listening** (Now through December)

- **If you are a volunteer or leader**, we will specifically reach out to you and the teams you work with to listen to your prayerful thoughts about our future as a church.
- **If you are a member** or part of our church family, you are part of this process as well.
 - **In Person** (First opportunities will be Sunday Evening, October 29 & Monday Evening, October 30 here at church). (More information and opportunities will be available in coming weeks).
 - **Online** – all our members will receive email guiding you to a place where you can give online written feedback as part of the process (coming later in October).

3) **Discerning** (January-February)

- After the listening phase, we will create smaller teams from the Elders, Staff, leadership and membership who will prayerfully work together to discern what God is saying to us.

4) **Unveiling** – Laying out our future Vision

- The goal will be to share our future Vision the end of February 2018.
- I like what the early church said in Acts 15:28 after they sought the Lord for future direction...

“It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us...” Acts 15:28

That’s what I want to be able to say!

I feel very encouraged over our future.

I believe our best days are ahead!

