

The Alpine Way

Section 1: We Are Driven by the Glory of God

Our mission at Alpine

Church is to help people pursue God by leading them to trust Jesus, honor God, and make disciples.

The Gospel

The Gospel is the good news story of God's gracious work in Jesus Christ to redeem and restore fallen humanity (1 Tim 1:15). We seek to live out the Gospel in our ministry, rooting our life together in its truths, not in human wisdom or mere pragmatism. This Gospel story affirms the reality of sin and brokenness (Rom 3:9-20). We are needy and dependent creatures. God's response to our sin is grace (Tit 3:3-7). He acts toward us with favor and blessing even though we deserve condemnation. This is evident through the cross and resurrection of Jesus (1 Cor 15:1-4). As we trust in Jesus' finished work, all of the rich and varied benefits of salvation are applied to us individually and we become part of God's redeemed family (Eph 2:8-9).

The Gospel teaches us that we are needy and dependent, not only when it comes to initial salvation, but also in our daily lives. It teaches us that God's good provision throughout our lives always comes by his grace, never by our worthiness (1 Cor 15:10). The Gospel reminds us that God is always the initiator, and that all of his good work on our behalf comes by faith. Even as we obey and honor him in life, our actions are an expression of faith, flowing out of his transforming work in us (Heb 10:35-38).

At the heart of the Gospel is the person of Jesus. Everything depends on his sacrificial love in action on our behalf and his ultimate power over sin and death. This is a story that we cannot value or tell enough. The Gospel teaches us that Jesus is central to every aspect of salvation, Christian living, and the life of the faith community. It teaches us that Jesus is always enough (Col 1:15-22).

The Great Commandment

In the Great Commandment (Matt 22:34-40), Jesus summarized the most essential elements of God's purpose for his people. In keeping with these priorities, as a church we are committed to live out and promote a deep, all-consuming love for God and a comparable love for people.

We express our love for God by honoring him in all things, obeying his word, and reflecting his heart in our activities and interactions (John 14:23-24) - as we are transformed and empowered by the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:16). We commit ourselves to embrace his mission. We cultivate an intimacy of relationship with him (Ps 27:4). We value the worship of God, both individually and corporately, and desire to see him exalted in our lives, our church, and our community (1 Cor 10:31).

We express our love for people by treating all people with value and respect (Rom 12:10). As an overflow of God's supernatural work in our lives, we commit ourselves to live together as God's people in the community of faith, heeding God's call to share life together in meaningful ways, so as to love one another, serve one another, bear one another's burdens, pray for one another, encourage one another, and more (Gal 5:13; Eph 4:2, 32; Phil 2:2-4; 1 Thess 5:11; Heb 10:25). We seek to love our neighbors by sharing the good news of Jesus with people far from God (Acts 1:8), and by doing good in our community (Gal 6:10). We love our neighbors as ourselves by prioritizing the needs of lost people to a par with the needs of our members.

The Great Commission

We take very seriously Jesus' mandate to make disciples (Matt 28:18-20). This flows naturally out of the Great Commandment. Making disciples expresses love for God because it honors his heart and purpose for humanity. It expresses love for people because it takes seriously their need and extends grace and hope in the Gospel. We call this "helping people pursue God."

Simply put, a disciple is a follower of Jesus. Based on the Great Commission, a disciple not only identifies initially with Jesus, but also lives in obedience to him, which includes embracing his mission in the world. Thus maturity as a disciple of Jesus is not defined by the accumulation of biblical and theological knowledge, nor by an abundance of church attendance and activity, nor by the number and power of spiritual experiences. While these all may have value in a believer's life, the ultimate measure of maturity is love for others (John 13:35). As outlined above, a primary expression of this love is when a follower of Jesus invests in making other disciples. We call this a "full circle" disciple - one who has trusted in Jesus for salvation, who then goes on to learn to honor God in every aspect of life, and who ultimately becomes active in making other disciples.

Disciples are made at Alpine Church in many ways. But at the heart of our ministry, we practice and promote a conversational approach, in the context of caring relationships, which we call "mentoring". In this approach, people use simple, easily reproducible tools to conduct conversations that lead a person through identifiable stages toward clearly-defined maturity in Christ, with the goal that the disciple becomes a disciple-maker. This approach is exemplified by the resources provided at www.pursueGOD.org, which constitute our preferred tool for making disciples.

In dependence on God's leading and empowerment, we are creating a culture of discipleship at Alpine Church. This goes far beyond having classes on discipleship or operating a church-centric program. Rather, we envision all Christians embracing Jesus' mandate for them and taking steps to mentor others within their sphere of relationships. The Great Commission animates all we do. While most churches measure their success by weekend attendance and giving, we are committed to measuring our success in every area by the quality of disciple-making that actually happens in our homes, small groups, neighborhoods, and workplaces. We specifically organize ourselves to make disciples in families, small groups, ministry teams, and one-on-one relationships, but every ministry of the church is seen through this lens and contributes toward this goal. Our paid staff and volunteer leaders are committed to

making disciples as the heart of their ministry, and work to equip every believer to do the “ministry” of conversational disciple-making. This means we are constantly driving people to our “conversation starter” library at pursueGOD.org/ac. To create this culture, we devise distinctive language and practices that catalyze disciple-making for everyone. We are also committed to measuring how we are doing at creating this culture. (Specific applications of disciple-making in church life are detailed in Sections 3, 4 and 5 below.)

Because of Jesus’ mandate, we see ourselves as people on mission for the sake of others, not as consumers seeking to get the church to meet our needs first. We are willing to give up things we love for the sake of things we love more, sacrificing our own preferences to make it possible for more people to pursue God.

Our commitment to fulfilling the Great Commission leads us to find ways to be a resource to encourage and equip other churches and ministries to also make disciples who make disciples. One expression of this is our synergistic relationship with pursueGOD.org. Alpine Church originally created and now supports pursueGOD.org in order to facilitate our own disciple-making efforts, but also to share what we have learned and developed with everyone. While no longer owned by Alpine Church, pursueGOD.org remains our primary partner for disciple-making strategy and resources.

The Authority of the Bible

Our life and ministry as a church is based on the authority of the Bible, which is the final arbiter of what we believe and how we operate (1 Thess 2:13). We follow and apply the Bible as the word of God himself for us, individually and corporately (2 Tim 3:16-17). Thus we realize the importance of equipping Christians to understand and apply biblical truth (Josh 1:8). We recognize that the Bible does not speak with equal clarity or conviction on all matters, so we discern the difference between essential and non-essential matters of belief and practice, and we interact among ourselves and with others accordingly. (What we consider to be essentials of belief are defined in our [Statement of Faith](#).)

These fundamental convictions about beliefs, values, and way of life may be lived out by faithful Christians in many different ways. But in whatever ways the Holy Spirit leads us to apply God’s word in the life and ministry of the church, we will create ways to measure how well we are applying them (Prov 27:23).

Section 2: We Are Culturally Informed

At Alpine Church, we understand and take into account the culture that surrounds us in this moment of time. This helps us to wisely contextualize our ministry practices, so that we can be more effective in fulfilling the Great Commandment and the Great Commission in the arena where God has placed us.

Our primary field of engagement begins with the Wasatch Front of Utah, and extends to other areas throughout the Intermountain West where the culture of Mormonism is most rooted. We share the Gospel with all those we encounter, but our target audience is disaffected

Latter-day Saints and others with a Mormon background. As God gives opportunity, we are open to serving in areas beyond the Mormon cultural domain, but we are especially interested in areas where Mormonism is common.

With this audience in mind, we live out our church life and ministry in a way that wisely takes into account the Latter-day Saint worldview and culture (1 Cor 9:19-23). We understand the cultural norms of the people we desire to reach, in order to present the Gospel in ways that sound like good news to them. We discern what elements in the surrounding culture can be affirmed, what must be challenged by Scripture, and where this culture creates points of contact for the Gospel message. We thoughtfully communicate the church's message and practices in a way that is intelligible and welcoming to people nurtured in the Latter-day Saint culture. We also desire to be a resource to other churches and ministries in this regard.

Since Mormon culture places a high value on the family, and our region is dominated by young families and children, we provide attractive ministries and excellent resources that will help families find and nurture biblical faith. At the same time, we recognize that our region is increasingly influenced by the growing proportion of single adults in American society.

Realizing that the cultural setting in which we are planted will inevitably change, we maintain a bias toward the future. We are ready to adapt our approaches and ministries as needed to keep pace with changes in the Mormon and the broader American cultures - while remaining rooted in the unchanging Gospel and the timeless word of God.

While our ministry is focused on the Gospel and the priority of making full-circle disciples, we are aware that broader issues in local and national cultural life do affect the church and its ministry. We do not choose to be an issues-oriented or a politicized church, but we will offer biblical guidance to the church's members on important and timely cultural issues when we believe it is needed. To do so, we will encourage conversations about such issues in small groups, mentoring relationships, and families, and will provide resources to guide and empower those conversations.

Section 3: We Help People Come to Trust Jesus

The starting point of true disciple-making is to introduce people to a saving relationship with God through Jesus Christ - as demonstrated by baptism (Matt 28:19). As such, the church exists for people who haven't come to trust in Jesus yet as much for those who have. We think about our ministries with this audience in mind.

An Invitational Strategy

The primary approach we employ to draw people to faith in Christ is to encourage and train Christians to be invitational. This starts with engaging in a relationship (Matt 9:10-12), leading to invitations to attend events the church may sponsor (John 1:45-46), and eventually

an invitation into disciple-making conversations. Each level of invitation is seen as a catalytic step in a process that ultimately leads others to pursue God with a mentor or in a small group. Some of the events sponsored by the church have the purpose of exposing guests to Alpine Church in a favorable way. Others incorporate a presentation of the Gospel. All events - including, but not limited to, weekend worship services - are designed to connect with and speak to members of the prevailing culture in some way.

To make the most of Alpiners' active engagement in the lives of others, we equip them with the vision and skills to confidently invest in relationships with non-Christians (Col 4:5-6). We also seek to gain their confidence by creating top quality events that are emotionally safe for their guests. In response to any invitational event we put on, we hope that Alpiners will say, "I wish my friend was here today!"

Worship Services as a Gateway

Our primary invitational event is the weekly worship gathering. In a religious culture where pursuing God is equated with church attendance, and where church buildings are a prominent part of the landscape, we find it wise to offer our worship gatherings as the most likely place where people can begin their pursuit of God.

As a result, worship services are considered a "gateway" experience. This means that we always seek to make our services a place where unchurched people take the first steps toward trusting Jesus. Our services are centered on the Gospel and offer clear and frequent appeals for guests to trust in Jesus. Thus at times (as the Spirit leads) we will explicitly invite people to pray to trust in Jesus at the end of a service or sermon.

But our worship services also serve as a gateway into actual, measurable discipleship relationships. As important as it is to give people a concrete opportunity to trust in Jesus, we are not satisfied with simply offering that choice. It is our responsibility to connect those who profess faith in Jesus into disciple-making relationships where they can be shepherded toward full circle faith (Matt 9:35-36).

To maximize the invitational impact of our services, we intentionally look at the event from the perspective of the guest, and place the guest's needs above our own preferences. To create an environment of welcome, we consider how our buildings look, how we dress, and the practices by which we receive our guests. We make it our purpose to avoid insider language and to minimize unnecessary awkward moments.

We endeavor to use stories of real people, in various mediums, to present Christian faith in relatable and authentic terms. We seek to provide meaningful pathways for guests to take their next steps toward Jesus and toward the church, including orientation classes, easy access to small groups, and opportunities to find a mentor.

Yet the purpose of worship services is not only to provide a vehicle for outreach, but also for God's people to practice genuine worship, to experience the church's ordinances, to receive meaningful instruction, and to have opportunity for relational connection.

Online worship services are designed to express all the basic purposes and principles that apply to in-person services, as stated above.

Preaching

In keeping with our disciple-making strategy, we seek to teach in a way that makes sense to and is not off-putting to non-Christians, especially those from a Latter-day Saint background. For example, while we address issues pertinent to Mormonism (and other performance-based religious systems), we do not speak directly about Mormonism from the pulpit. This is potentially offensive to our guests, and undermines our invitational strategy by making people hesitate to bring LDS guests. Specific issues related to Mormonism are best addressed in families, small groups, and individual mentoring relationships.

The goal for many modern churches is to get people to come to church and listen to a sermon. At Alpine, the sermon is designed to set up conversations - at home, in small groups, or in one-on-one mentoring relationships - by providing content for people to discuss together. Thus every sermon that we preach is connected to a conversation starter at pursueGOD.org.

Children's Ministry

Children's ministry is a key element of our weekly worship gatherings. Our Kids Church provides opportunities for children to hear the Gospel and trust in Jesus. Our curriculum invites kids to talk to a parent (or a teacher, as necessary) about Jesus. Children's ministry is also catalytic in drawing adults to our gateway services. We want our children to love their experience so much that they ask their parents to bring them to church.

The most important aspect of our children's ministry is to equip parents with resources to lead their own kids to Christ - and to express that faith in baptism. We believe that parents are the pastors of their homes (Deut 6:1-9), and have ultimate responsibility for their children hearing and understanding the Gospel (Eph 6:4). Our children's ministry is intended to be the biggest cheerleader and the best resource for parents in this pastoring role. Family discipleship is messy, so to help parents succeed, we provide resources for them to lead faith conversations with their children, by integrating our Kid's Church curriculum with conversation starters found at pursueGODkids.org/AC. We also provide opportunities for regular feedback from parents. We encourage them to track their conversations with their children so we can celebrate with them.

Youth Ministry

We expect that students can become full circle disciples of Jesus. As a result, our Fusion youth ministry is based on the same principles of disciple-making that animate all the ministries of the church, but tailored to a student context.

One purpose of Fusion is to help students come to faith in Jesus by creating a welcoming gateway experience where Christian students can confidently invite friends. As with adults, students will have opportunities to hear the Gospel and trust in Jesus, but in a setting that they can relate to and enjoy. They will also have opportunities to enter disciple-making relationships - such as in student groups led by student mentors. To maximize our impact, we clearly communicate this strategy to both youth and their parents, and train students to be invitational and purposeful about their relationships.

We also offer other invitational events for unchurched students, such as winter and summer camps, with the same purpose. Yet while large group events such as a midweek service and youth retreats are important, student groups are our first priority for youth ministry. Events support student groups, not the other way around.

Other Ministry Avenues

Our priority of helping people come to trust in Jesus is reflected in our internet presence. Our web sites will be attractive and inviting to guests. We will include a clear presentation of the Gospel, and direct people to clear next steps in the disciple-making process.

Along with invitational events, we strongly encourage one-on-one mentoring as another vehicle for helping people come to faith in Jesus, using the resource library at pursueGOD.org to provide training as well as relevant discussion topics.

Small groups are not envisioned as a primary invitational environment for helping people come to trust in Jesus. But we do encourage small groups to be welcoming to guests, including those who are not yet Christians. We also encourage small groups to represent Jesus by serving together in the community.

We encourage Alpiners to initiate targeted ministries such as men's groups, women's groups, recovery groups, and more, as a creative way to help people begin a pursuit of God. Whatever other needs such ministries might address, their primary purpose will be to make full circle disciples in keeping with the Alpine Way.

Our compassionate outreach ministry in the community, Alpine Cares, is an expression of love for our neighbors. Even as we act with compassion to meet tangible needs, we also seek to connect in relationships through which we can encourage people toward faith decisions, and ultimately toward full circle discipleship.

We engage in the spread of the Gospel around the world by generously supporting international ministries and missionaries. In choosing global partners, we give preference to individuals and agencies that focus on making disciples who make disciples, especially, where possible, by using the conversation library at pursueGOD.org.

Section 4: We Help People Honor God

A person's initial trust in Jesus for salvation is only the starting point of a life of a disciple. The second phase of discipleship involves developing a lifestyle that honors God.

What It Means to Honor God

Based on the great commandment, a lifestyle that honors God involves growing in love for God and in love for other people.

Love for God has several expressions. The first is longing. Our love for God is expressed by a desire to commune with him (Ps 27:4). We encourage spiritual disciplines like prayer, Bible reading, and worship, not out of duty, but as means to pursue intimacy with God. We also express our love for God by loyalty. God deserves to have no competition in our motives, priorities, commitments and desires (1 John 2:15). Third, the Bible defines love for God in terms of obedience (John 14:23). If we love God, we find out what pleases him and do it. This includes obeying him in lifestyle choices, in service, in managing resources wisely and generously for his purposes, and in choosing his mission for our lives.

We also honor God by our love for his people. We live in community with other Christians, spending time together, caring about each other, and serving each other in both formal and informal ways.

How We Grow in Honoring God

We recognize that God is at work in his people in three primary ways to bring them to greater maturity. First, he uses the Bible to inform and inspire us (Heb 4:12). Second, the Holy Spirit lives in us to produce supernatural holiness and to empower us for obedience (Gal 5:22-23). Third, God uses relationships to shape and sharpen us (Heb 10:24-25). Each of these function in the context of the organized church as we intentionally work together to help people live to honor God.

Worship

As God is present among his people in corporate worship, our love toward him is stimulated. Gathering in worship encourages us to express our praise, contrition, surrender, and trust. In the church's ordinances, we remember the Gospel and its powerful, transforming effects (1 Cor 11:23-26; Rom 6:4). Worship is not a star-studded show emphasizing the talents of a few, but engages all who attend in a response to God's self-revelation. As such, we strive for competence, not perfection, in the execution of worship events.

Teaching

The ministry of public teaching at Alpine Church will be rooted in and be faithful to the Bible. Messages will be clear, concise, and compelling. They will be composed in a way that equips and assists mentors and small group leaders to help people live to honor God.

In our teaching, we address Christians as well as our unchurched guests. We help them develop familiarity with the Bible, and model how to read and study it, in order to equip people to read it for themselves. We provide a basic theological and ethical foundation upon which Christians can build. Our teaching draws them into a longing for God. It challenges false ideas and idols that steal people's loyalty. It shows people how to live out the Gospel, pointing out practical ways to apply God's truth in daily life. Our teaching leads people to obedient action in lifestyle, including in habits, relationships, and stewardship of resources. It encourages them to trust God with their decisions.

We practice a collaborative approach to sermon preparation, drawing on the strengths and insights of the whole team. This approach allows us to provide resources that empower a variety of people to teach, and that help in the development of new teachers. The collaborative approach prevents a personality-based ministry, so we aren't pointing people to one prominent preacher, but to Jesus.

Mentoring Relationships

As a one-way form of communication, sermons are not the best medium for the interactive exploration of biblical truth that leads to transformation. By contrast, mentoring relationships allow Christians to ask questions, raise concerns, talk about applications, and receive encouragement and accountability toward faith and obedience. Thus we emphasize

personal mentoring relationships in conjunction with public teaching to provide individualized training in the Christian life. One-on-one mentoring, using the conversation library at pursueGOD.org/ac, is the preferred way to train people in topics like spiritual disciplines, lifestyle choices, overcoming specific obedience barriers, generosity and stewardship, godly decision-making, handling adversity, and more.

Small Groups

We believe that Christians grow in their faith by discovering and processing the truth together. Small groups are an excellent environment for this to happen. Small group leaders do not create mini-sermons, but lead discussions where everyone participates in learning. Our small groups offer a gracious, non-condemning relational environment that allows people to be honest and vulnerable about faith and obedience challenges they face.

Small groups are a primary place where true community is lived out as group members live out the “one-another” practices of the Bible.

Leaders also equip group members to participate in meeting the practical needs of the group, so that people discover their gifts (1 Cor 12:7) and develop service, faith, and obedience.

Children’s Ministry

In our weekly Kid’s Church gatherings, we expose children to the basic biblical background knowledge, concepts and practices that develop a heart for and understanding of what it means to honor God.

Based on the principle that parents are the primary pastors of their children, we also equip parents with simple, accessible resources to help their own children develop faith, obedience, spiritual disciples, lifestyle choices, and more, in the context of family life.

Youth Ministry

We influence students toward love for God and others through student-led small groups, supported by mentoring relationships between students and adult leaders.

Weekly gatherings and special events also help students learn to honor God by teaching about relevant biblical topics, by the godly example of volunteer staff, and by befriending students and speaking into their lives. As helpful as such gatherings are, events support mentoring relationships and student groups, not the other way around.

We also seek to motivate and equip parents to use the conversation topics at pursueGOD.org/students to mentor their own teens to honor God.

Special Events

We occasionally sponsor special events like retreats, rallies, workshops, and conferences to provide biblical grounding for a life that honors God, by addressing key topics in the Christian life.

Special events serve as a gateway for Christians into discipleship, by helping attendees connect into potential mentoring relationships. As such, these events will always include a strategy for connecting people with mentors after the event.

Serving Teams

We highly value people's volunteer service as a concrete way that people honor God with their lives, as they use and develop their gifts and contribute to the church's overall strategy to help people pursue God. Our pastoral staff exists to equip ordinary Christians for ministry, including their personal disciple-making activity, but also includes service to others through the church's ministry teams.

To maintain a strong serving culture, we invest in the people who serve at Alpine Church. We invest in them relationally by getting to know them personally, caring about their life outside of ministry, and showing them they are valued and appreciated. We invest in them spiritually by giving them opportunities to be mentored and by otherwise helping them grow in their relationship with God. We invest in their skill development by equipping them well at the start and by giving regular, constructive feedback. We invest in their mental and emotional health by helping them connect relationally with others and by giving them regular breaks. We seek to minimize frustration and burnout by providing clear role descriptions and clear expectations for serving.

Other Ministry Avenues

The heartbeat of men's and women's ministries is individual mentoring. Men disciple other men and women disciple other women, using resources provided at pursueGOD.org/men and pursueGOD.org/women. We may sponsor men's or women's events as catalysts to develop new mentoring relationships.

By serving in our Alpine Cares community outreach ministry, God gives Christians an opportunity to grow in faith and love. They come to reflect the loving heart of God toward people, and develop their own trust in God by doing uncomfortable, sacrificial work for others.

When Christians face life-controlling challenges like addiction or serious marital failure, our staff will refer them to professional counselors. What we will equip our staff and volunteers to do is to come alongside people to address common life issues using our standard conversational disciple-making tools.

Section 5: We Help People Make Disciples

The ultimate mission of the church is not only to see people come to faith in Jesus, or even to develop people into a God-honoring lifestyle, but to equip and mobilize followers of Jesus to make disciples who make disciples.

The Priority of Multiplying Disciples

We desire and encourage every person to go "full circle". A full circle disciple is someone who has trusted in Jesus for salvation, who then learns to honor God in every aspect of life, and who ultimately becomes active in making other disciples. As they invest in other people to help them pursue God, full-circle disciples fuel the multiplication of disciple-makers, as described in 2 Timothy 2:2.

Christians and churches typically define maturity in terms of Bible knowledge, church involvement, ministry service, or spiritual experiences. While all of these are important aspects of the Christian life, we define Christian maturity as loving others enough to make disciples. We assert that every Christian is called to and can make disciples. In fact, doing so is a powerful catalyst that accelerates maturity in Christ.

Disciple-making is not a department or a specialized ministry of the church; it is the essential work of the church. While other churches may measure success by weekend attendance and giving, or by the number of ministries they offer, we measure success in every area of church life by the quality of disciple-making that actually takes place. We envision every ministry of the church helping to equip people to make disciples, not only within the formal church organization, but in homes, neighborhoods, workplaces, and more.

Our Core Disciple-making Environments

While every church ministry contributes to our disciple-making mission, we identify four particular environments where disciple-making (which we call “mentoring”) primarily occurs.

Families. Parents are the primary pastors and disciplers of their children, intentionally transferring their values and consistently teaching the truth of God’s word (Deut 6:1-9), using resources like those at pursueGODkids.org. The goal of our Kids’ Church and Fusion ministries is not to replace parents, but to partner with and resource them to mentor their own children.

Small groups. When led by people with a disciple-making mindset, small groups are an ideal mentoring environment. We emphasize groups where leaders mentor new leaders, model disciple-making, and equip their group members as mentors. Small groups are also a key disciple-making environment in Fusion youth ministry when modified for students.

Ministry teams. Along with their practical function, serving teams provide opportunities for discipleship relationships. Whenever possible, leaders equip team members for ministry using mentoring principles. They also take a personal interest in team members’ pursuit of God, and seek to inject mentoring conversations into the culture of the team.

One-on-one relationships. The most basic type of mentoring is when one person helps someone else directly and personally. (This can also include one-on-two or one-on-three relationships at times.) Not everyone is a parent, or will lead a small group or a ministry team, but everyone can mentor someone else one-on-one. We also promote marriage or couples mentoring as a specialized application of one-on-one mentoring.

Our Process

As stated above, disciples progress through a clearly defined process of three stages: we start by trusting Jesus, we live to honor God, and we grow mature by helping others pursue God. Corresponding to this process of personal growth is a simple strategy that defines the role of a mentor.

Engage. A mentor starts by building a caring relationship, learning about the other person, assessing his or her needs, developing rapport and trust, and casting vision for what the relationship can be. Conversations might be about life, faith, or anything in between.

Establish. In time, the mentoring focus shifts to a core series of essential topics, designed to intentionally lead a person through the three phases of full-circle discipleship.

Empower. As the person being mentored prepares to become a mentor, whether at home or one-on-one, the mentor trains and coaches him or her to succeed in their new role.

We are committed to tracking and measuring how the church is doing at bringing people through key milestones in this process, remembering that the goal is not to record numbers, but to help as many individual persons as possible grow to maturity as Christ-followers.

Our Preferred Methods of Making Disciples

Disciples are made at Alpine Church in many ways. But at the heart of our ministry, we practice and promote a conversational approach, in the context of caring relationships.

We believe that simple, easily reproducible tools make it possible for every follower of Jesus to become a disciple-maker, by giving ordinary Christians a way to lead others through the stages of growth outlined above.

This method and these tools are best exemplified by the resources provided at www.pursueGOD.org (and its sister sites). As such, these sites constitute our preferred approach for making disciples. We will constantly seek to invite people to our conversation starter library at pursueGOD.org/ac. We will work closely with pursueGOD.org to create and improve the necessary tools to help people go full circle.

We do not view this approach as a rigid technique to be used woodenly, or applied the same way in every situation, but as a helpful instrument to start conversations in a way that makes disciple-making accessible for everyone. We are committed to continually training our staff, leaders and members to adapt pursueGOD.org tools skillfully to every kind of situation.

Although PursueGOD.org tools best support our value of reproducible, conversational disciple-making that ordinary Christians can do, we are open to Alpiners using other tools at times. However, we discourage methods that are not:

- Conversational and relational.
- Simple and easy for mentors and those being mentored.
- Inexpensive or free.
- Usable by anyone, regardless of Bible or theological knowledge, ministry skills, or experience.
- Easily reproducible in the lives of others.

The Role of Our Staff

Disciple-making can be hard, and most Christians don't feel qualified to do it. That's why staff members invite Christians into discipling relationships with the goal of modeling before empowering. The invitation is simple: "Can I disciple you for a few months to show you how to do it?" Jesus invited simple fishermen to follow him with a clear goal in mind - to turn regular people into fruitful disciple-makers. That's our ministry goal at Alpine. We believe nothing inspires and equips disciple-making like disciple-making. Instead of just preaching to it, we want to model it systematically through every ministry, life-on-life.

Staff members also actively look to identify disciple-making opportunities and to connect those who express a desire to be mentored with those who can mentor them.

Worship Services

Our worship gatherings provide a prime opportunity to cast vision for disciple-making. This is done when we use media to tell stories of full-circle disciples, and when teachers establish the biblical priority of making disciples and highlight it through frequent illustrations and applications.

Worship gatherings also provide many opportunities to identify people with needs that can be addressed in a mentoring relationship, and to connect them with mentors.

Children's Ministry

The ultimate goal of our Kids Church is to empower parents to disciple their children at home. Our Sunday curriculum and related resources are designed to give parents tools to succeed. We envision our children growing up to become mentors themselves, based on the investment and example of their parents.

Youth Ministry

We expect that students can become full circle disciples of Jesus. As a result, our Fusion ministry is based on the same principles of disciple-making that animate all the ministries of the church, but tailored to a student context. This strategy is clearly communicated to both youth and their parents.

The primary vehicle for making disciples in Fusion is student groups. With this in mind, we will equip students to be intentional and purposeful about their relationships, and will train them to disciple other students in groups. We also support disciple-making by making mentoring a priority for our volunteer staff, and training them accordingly.

Every large-group event will be planned with the goal of encouraging disciple-making relationships and groups. Events support mentoring, not the other way around.

Other Ministry Avenues

Men's and women's ministries exist to make disciples who make disciples. Individually or in small groups, men mentor other men to go full circle, just as women mentor other women. Our preferred resources are those provided at pursueGOD.org/ac, pursueGOD.org/men and pursueGOD.org/women.

Special events serve as a catalyst for discipleship relationships by helping attendees get established in mentoring relationships. As such, any event sponsored by the Church or by an individual campus will include a strategy for connecting people with mentors afterwards.

In the context of expressing practical compassion to our neighbors, the Alpine Cares ministry has the ultimate goal of connecting people to Jesus and engaging them in the process of full circle disciple-making.

Section 6: We Are a Multi-Site Church

Every church style and structure has advantages and can reach different people. But we choose to operate as a multi-site church, meaning that we are one church meeting in several locations. As one church, we have one set of beliefs, one mission, and one financial and organizational

structure. This central structure exists to support the ministry that occurs through local leaders and volunteers at each campus.

Multi-site Advantages

We favor a multi-site approach because it combines the strengths of larger and of smaller churches. It allows us to reach local communities with the Gospel by being dispersed into those communities, where people can more readily invite their friends and where the congregation can be more adaptive to local culture and needs. Being multi-site allows for smaller campuses, which feel more natural and welcoming in our religious culture. Smaller buildings are also more cost-effective to build. Decentralizing also allows more talent to emerge at each location. As part of one larger church, local campus leaders can feel like part of a team and can minister with greater consistency. The church can do more for less money and with greater excellence by sharing organizational functions and specialized personnel between all campuses. Our unity across campuses allows us to preserve and multiply broadly the unique mission, vision and values of Alpine Church.

Making Disciples and Multiplying Campuses

We believe in multiplying new campuses in order to reach new neighborhoods and cities with the Gospel. But multiplying campuses must be seen as the end result of multiplying disciples. We believe that disciples make more disciples. Leaders develop more leaders. Groups reproduce more groups. Worship gatherings multiply, along with the ministry teams that support them. Eventually the byproduct of multiplication at every level is that new campuses are birthed, but it starts with disciples who make disciples. In other words, our ultimate goal is not to launch new campuses, but to make disciples. In the end, new campuses will follow.

When to Multiply

Adding campuses can be done by birthing new congregations in under-churched communities, or by adopting existing, like-minded congregations. Where there are already a number of Alpiners in mentoring relationships, and where a new campus can be strongly supported by existing staff, we may launch by “hiving off” a core group from an existing campus as the nucleus of the new congregation. Where there are few to no Alpiners, we may delegate a team from Alpine to be sent out to launch the new campus. We may adopt an existing church with a like-minded philosophy of ministry, if it is willing to accept Alpine’s values, mission and leadership, as expressed in core documents like the Alpine Way.

We will monitor the overall health of existing campuses, especially the vigor of our disciple-making culture, before we take the initiative to open a new campus. Prior to launching a new campus, our Senior Leadership Team (the Governing Board together with the Executive Team) will set appropriate financial, leadership and disciple-making benchmarks. Prior to adopting an existing church, our leadership team will set appropriate financial benchmarks, and define a pathway for that church to embrace our philosophy of ministry and disciple-making practices.

How Campuses Relate to Central Leadership

Different multi-site churches follow different models for how campuses relate to each other and to the church's central leadership. At Alpine Church, we have no "main" campus. All campuses are equivalent in standing, although they may vary in size and history. Campuses are not in competition with each other for people, resources, or honor, but work together for each other and for the common good. When one campus suffers, we all suffer and act accordingly. When one campus succeeds, we all celebrate.

Unity

Alpine Church has one governing structure for the entire church, uniting all campuses. Each campus is separately managed by its local leaders and pastored by local elders, but all campuses are ultimately under the jurisdiction of Alpine's Senior Leadership Team. The practical affairs of the church as a whole are managed by the Executive Team, led by the Senior Pastor and under the broad direction of the Governing Board. This governing structure does not exist as an end unto itself, but solely to support and unify the ministry of our local campuses.

Alpine Church has one [doctrinal statement](#) to which all campuses and staff adhere. When the church speaks officially on cultural, social, or theological issues beyond the doctrinal statement, it speaks with one voice and has only one official position that governs all campuses.

Alpine Church has one common mission, vision and philosophy of ministry, as outlined in The Alpine Way, which governs the entire church and each of its campuses. The church has one common strategy, uniting all campuses in the initiatives and expansion efforts of the church. Alpine Church has one common goal that applies to all campuses, to help people pursue God through conversational disciple-making.

Alpine Church has one financial structure. All funds received belong to Alpine Church and not to any individual campus. However, each campus is responsible to collect enough funds to sustain its own ministry and also to contribute to the needs of the entire church. Each campus takes ownership of its own budget, as well as the common budget of Alpine Church.

Typically, people attending any campus of Alpine Church will hear the same sermon each week, delivered by different people, but aligned in its basic content and application.

Each campus will promote not only its own events, but general events and initiatives that belong to the whole church.

The church will promote a similar structure and feel between campuses, as far as this is practical.

Diversity

Despite the common mission, strategy, governance, and financial structure, each campus has some flexibility to execute Alpine Church's mission in ways that make sense within its own unique community. We recognize that disciple-making, pastoral care and shepherding take place primarily through the ministries of each individual campus, led by the local elders or overseers. We believe that ministry should be adapted to different settings, with the result that each campus has the freedom to plan accordingly, within reason. Each campus leadership team also has authority to make decisions pertaining to their own campus, within the boundaries of our common mission, philosophy of ministry, governance, and finances.

Section 7: We Practice Healthy Leadership

Alpine Church's mission to glorify God by living out the Great Commission and the Great Commandment requires a competent, unified and healthy leadership team, including both lay leaders and staff. As a result, our leaders embrace the core values that define Alpine Church as a whole, as well as the philosophy and values of leadership expressed below.

Core Values

1. We look to God and His Word in all we do.

We unashamedly preach the Gospel and pursue Biblical truth. (2 Tim. 3:16-17)

2. We work hard at healthy relationships.

People matter, and that means we think the best of each other, speak the truth in love. (Eph 4:2-3)

3. We win as a team, not as individuals.

There's strength in numbers, and we believe everyone has something to offer. We give ministry away. (Eccl. 4:9-12)

4. We give up things we love for things we love more.

We won't let our comfort get in the way of what God desires to do through us. That's why we give sacrificially. (1 Cor. 10:33)

5. We're on mission with Jesus.

Jesus is the head of this church and his commission is our command. (Matt. 28:19-20)

Philosophy of Leadership

Leadership in the church is an honorable role (1 Tim 3:1; 1 Tim 5:17). The health of the church depends on the quality of its leaders (as defined below). Jesus described the essence of leadership as servanthood (Lk 22:25-26). Servant leaders seek the welfare of the church and its people, not their own ambition. They willingly embrace any assignment necessary to advance the church's mission. They find their confidence not in experience, knowledge, abilities, achievements or position, but in dependence on God (Ex 3:10-12).

We believe that leadership in a local church must be shared (Phil 1:1). We acknowledge the value of strong, godly and visionary leadership and the legitimate authority of senior leaders. Yet no leader acts independently of supervision, accountability and counsel. Our leaders operate with well defined roles and responsibilities, within a clear organizational structure, and with decision-making authority appropriate to their role. Every leader reports directly to one person. Only the Senior Pastor reports to the governing board, in which the ultimate authority of the church resides (under Christ).

Wherever possible, we prefer to organize our ministry in teams, where leaders collaborate to make decisions about shared goals. While every team has one identifiable leader, team members are interdependent, pooling their gifts, experience, and perspective for better decisions. Team members are committed not only to the team's objectives, but to one another.

Profile of a Healthy Leader

All leaders at Alpine Church, whether lay or staff, are expected to pursue healthy leadership, as empowered by the Holy Spirit and defined by these five marks.

1. **Spiritual**

- a. Leaders are humbly submitted to Jesus as Savior and Lord.
- b. Leaders are fervent and wholehearted toward their calling, yet do not look to ministry success as an idol.
- c. Leaders are faithful. They can be counted on when it really matters.
- d. Leaders strive to honor God with excellence in their work, while depending on God for the results.

2. **Missional**

- a. Leaders actively and regularly disciple others at home, in the church, and in the community, using the “full-circle” definition, the conversational method, and the pursueGOD.org tools.
- b. Leaders have a passion for Alpine Church. They are enthusiastic cheerleaders for the church and its ministry. They live out and promote the church’s values and priorities, as expressed in The Alpine Way.

3. **Emotional**

- a. Leaders celebrate their strengths and take ownership of their weaknesses.
- b. Leaders are teachable. They admit areas of need, seek out and accept honest feedback, and commit to continuous growth and improvement.
- c. Leaders remain positive and engaged when decisions are made that are contrary to their desires or point of view.

4. **Relational**

- a. Leaders care about people, not just about getting tasks done.
- b. Leaders celebrate and defend others on the team.
- c. Leaders engage in conflict well, speaking the truth in love.
- d. When leaders have a problem with someone, they speak to that person first, and encourage others to do the same.
- e. Leaders define success in team versus individual terms. They desire to see the church and kingdom prosper, not just themselves.

5. **Financial**

Leaders are generous to God through regular, sacrificial giving. Leaders at Alpine Church give financially to Alpine Church.

Support for Leaders

We value our volunteer leaders and seek to invest in God’s work in them, not just through them. We do this by mentoring them in their pursuit of God, celebrating their wins in both life and ministry, and showing compassion in difficult circumstances. We support their success by making their duties and authority clear, by equipping them for their role, by giving regular, constructive feedback, and by providing opportunities for them to learn and to play together with other leaders.

We value the members of our staff and seek to invest in God's work in and through them, both in life and ministry. We are committed to pastoring our staff, caring about them and their families independent of job expectations. We will communicate in words and actions that we have their best interests at heart, by mentoring them in their pursuit of God, by helping them to maintain a proper work/life balance, by celebrating their wins in life and ministry, and by showing care and compassion in difficult circumstances.

To help our staff thrive in their callings, we will make their duties and authority clear. We will equip those in supervisory roles to lead them well. We will furnish opportunities for staff members to be trained and to grow in ministry skills and knowledge. We will clearly define their lines of supervision, and will give regular, constructive feedback about their work based on clear-cut expectations. We will recognize when "above and beyond" behavior and effort are achieved. We will give our staff opportunities to learn and to play together with other staff members.

To provide our staff members with a positive, secure work environment, we will compensate our staff fairly. We will protect their privacy in personal or work-related conversations. We will provide a safe way to air grievances. No one will be demoted or released from employment without due process, including clear feedback based on well-defined duties and objectives. No one's job description will be changed, or their position reclassified, without ample discussion with the staff member(s) affected.

Relationships and Communication

Because we value the people God has placed on our team, we seek to create a thriving relational environment. All of our staff and volunteer leaders are intentional about practicing healthy relationships, as follows:

Attitudes

We seek to develop a leadership culture where we truly appreciate, honor, and believe the best of each other (1 Thess 5:12-13). We treat others with empathy and understanding when they make mistakes or when we disagree.

We trust that leaders will grow in the ability to recognize and take responsibility for their own thoughts and feelings (Matt 7:3-5). We will learn to assess, admit to, and talk about our own limits, strengths, weaknesses, and mistakes, without being proud or defensive.

We will make every effort to avoid creating or spreading disunity or dissension (Titus 3:10; Gal 5:20).

Words

We expect leaders to listen carefully and attentively, seeking to understand before we speak (Prov 18:13). When we do speak, we want to express frequent and genuine appreciation and encouragement.

Every leader will strive to consistently tell the truth, so that everything we say can be trusted (2 Cor 4:2-3). Thus we will ask for what we need or want, clearly and honestly. We will express what we really think, without a hidden agenda. We will not tell someone one thing to

their face, then tell others something else. In speaking the truth, we will do so graciously, in love, with the other person's best interests at heart (Eph 4:15).

When under stress, we will state our own beliefs and values without becoming antagonistic.

We are committed to fair communication. As such, we will avoid sideways and back-channel conversations. We will not speak for others. We will not undermine someone's credibility or character when speaking about them (Rom 12:10). When we do talk to others about members of our staff or teams, it is to praise, defend and honor them.

Behaviors

As leaders, we seek to develop trust by treating other people with respect. If we must raise concerns about the church or other leaders, we do so humbly, with the goal of reconciliation, following the pattern of Matthew 18:15-22.

In situations of hurt or conflict, we resolve to be the first to seek reconciliation and to extend forgiveness (Matt 5:23-24). We are committed to managing conflict maturely: keeping calm, listening well, and believing the best. When we disagree, we will do so in ways that are life-giving and non-adversarial, seeking solutions that consider the perspectives of others (Rom 12:18).

Expanding our Leadership Pool

Our commitment to the principle of multiplication dictates that we are intentional about raising up new leaders. All current leaders are called to reproduce themselves in future leaders, and we are committed to developing tools and processes to facilitate this goal.

Regarding future staff members, whenever possible we prefer to fill staff vacancies by elevating existing leaders at Alpine Church who are committed to The Alpine Way and are proven in character and in ministry. We value formal theological training where appropriate and possible, but not as a priority over philosophical unity and proven ministry fruitfulness. When we do hire new staff, we follow a clear, consistent process to insure the best possible long-term results.

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Additional Resources / Supportive Documents

(to be linked here as they are developed)

1. Specific ministry-related summaries.
 - a. [Children's Ministry the Alpine Way](#)

- b. [Events the Alpine Way](#)
 - c. [Men's and Women's Ministry the Alpine Way](#)
 - d. [Outreach Ministry the Alpine Way](#)
 - e. [Preaching the Alpine Way](#)
 - f. [Small Groups the Alpine Way](#)
 - g. [Worship the Alpine Way](#)
 - h. [Youth Ministry the Alpine Way](#)
2. Policy handbook documents.
 3. Training series / PG series.
 - a. 7 week training series: The Alpine Way (include more Bible here)
 - b. Section 3: Training for pulpit teachers on teaching in our unique context
 4. Staff handbook.
 - a. Particularly reflecting Section 7: appeals policy; profile of a healthy leader; etc.
 - b. But also general stuff like job descriptions, reimbursals, vacation and sick leave, housing allowance, health care, retirement, and any other policy that affects staff.