

NAVIGATE 2030: THE ATLAS



The following “Microbook” has been compiled from the primary themes I taught in the Navigate message series. These five sermons, preached from September 7 through October 5, articulate the framework of Elmbrook’s 2025-2030 vision for ministry. While this guide will be a helpful point of entry, you are encouraged to visit Elmbrook.org and watch each of these messages in their entirety.

-Pastor Tim Breen

48 DEGREES, 52 MINUTES, 6 SECONDS SOUTH LATITUDE.

123 DEGREES, 23 MINUTES, AND 6 SECONDS WEST LONGITUDE.

These are the coordinates of the most remote place on Planet Earth. Somewhere in the heart of the South Pacific Ocean, lies an empty section of sea known as “Point Nemo.”

Nemo – long before it was associated with loveable lost clownfish – was the name given to a solitary sea captain in Jules Verne’s epic *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*. But Verne himself borrowed the title from a Latin word spoken since ancient times. *Nemo* is the old Roman word for “nobody.”

The name is appropriate, as this desolate dot lies farther from civilization than any location in the world. Eight-and-a-half million square miles of open ocean surround Point Nemo. At times, sailors passing through this patch of saltwater are closer to the astronauts on the International Space Station than they are to other humans on land.

Elmbrook, let’s imagine that we’ve found ourselves today at Point Nemo. Together, we are aboard a ship large enough to accompany our church family from Lake Country, Espanol, and Brookfield. An endless watery horizon encircles us. We are, quite literally, *in the middle of nowhere*.

But this empty space also holds out great opportunities for us. Because from this location, we can sail to thousands of different ports. Turning the rudder one way, we can travel to Australia. Point the craft in another direction and we we’ll end up in Japan. From Point Nemo we can head toward the mountains of Chile, or we can don our Hawaiian shirts and cruise toward Maui. If we have enough warm weather gear we can sail to Patagonia or Antarctica; if we’re really looking for trouble, we could chart a course for Pyongyang. The opportunities are endless.

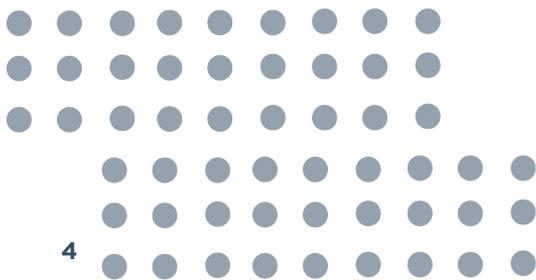
But you know what we *can’t* do? We can’t go to *all* these places. We cannot see every site along the Pacific Rim. We have to make choices. We have to prioritize.

The other thing we can't do, fellow sailors, is stay put. Sure, the weather's nice, but eventually we'll weary of playing shuffleboard on the lido deck. We were made for more than that, and Point Nemo is not our home. Either we set a direction...or we are set adrift.

Two thousand years ago, a traveling band of believers faced a similar spiritual scenario. The Apostle Paul, joined by early Christian evangelists like Timothy and Luke, was seeking another community in which to serve and preach. The scriptures record that they faced multiple "false starts" along the way. It was unclear where the Spirit wanted them to sail next.

Finally, God spoke to the believers in a dream. "Come to Macedonia and help us" said a man in the vision. Obediently, Paul and his colleagues took a big step across the waters, sailing from Asia to Europe and opening a grand new season of ministry on that continent.

NAVIGATE2030 ARTICULATES OUR CONGREGATIONAL CALL TO BE FAITHFUL TO THE HOLY SPIRIT'S CALL IN OUR OWN TIME. OUR VISION FOR WHAT'S NEXT IS GROUNDED IN A CONVICTION THAT OUR WORLD NEEDS MISSIONARIES, TOO. WE CAN NO LONGER ASSUME THAT LOST AND LONELY PEOPLE WILL NATURALLY MOVE TOWARD THE CHURCH. INSTEAD, WE MUST SEE OURSELVES AS SENT TO THEM—AS MISSIONARIES TO OUR OWN TIME AND PLACE.





OUR MISSION FIELD: UNDERSTANDING THE FOUR D'S

Before we can chart our course, we must understand the waters we're navigating. *For what reasons do our neighbors, co-workers, and family members need missionaries?*

While there are many answers, we should begin by admitting that North America is plagued by “the Four D’s”. We are:

DIVIDED:

Our society lacks a binding center. People are locating themselves in increasingly isolated tribes. Social media methods are geared toward tearing us apart rather than bringing us together. We are dis-integrated. We are lonely.

DE-CHURCHED:

Church attendance peaked in 1959 and has declined steadily since, with an especially pronounced drop-off around 1990. Sixty-five million people have stopped attending church in the last thirty years.

The causes are multiple: influential atheist voices, COVID-19 disruptions, geographical relocations, and widespread deconstruction of traditional values.

DISTRUSTING:

Our culture is skeptical of all institutional authority, but it's particularly cynical about the church. Financial impropriety, sex abuse scandals, power plays, and chronic hypocrisy have cost us moral authority.

DESPAIRING:

A secular, materialist worldview suggests that human existence is mere evolution and chance, that feelings are chemical reactions, and that life has no ultimate meaning. Genuine purpose has been evacuated from our daily tasks. Paradoxically, prosperity itself has contributed to this despair.

Many people get everything they want and still ask *“Is this all there is?”*



But – and it’s an important “but”...

Within this challenging context there exists tremendous opportunity. Sociologists looking at culture today are reporting a “vibe shift” among younger generations. Young people today find secular materialism untenable. They’re revealing new openness to Christianity, longing for something ancient, tangible, enchanted, and meaningful.

We may be witnessing the leading edge of Western society coming home to Jesus.



THE BIBLICAL FOUNDATION:

2 CORINTHIANS 5:11–6:2

Navigate2030 centers on a powerful passage from Paul’s second letter to the Corinthians:

“Since then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade others... For Christ’s love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God... I tell you, now is the time of God’s favor, now is the day of salvation.” (2 Corinthians 5:11-6:2)

This passage identifies us as *messengers of reconciliation*. We are witnesses to an epic story, storytellers of a transformative news.

THE FLAG FRAMEWORK

2 Corinthians 5 also upholds four key objectives for Navigate2030. These “coordinates” offer us targets toward which we will be directing energy and resources in the years ahead. Together, they form a memorable acronym: **FLAG**

A flag flying over a traveling vessel identifies who is onboard, conveys their loyalties, and reveals their destination. Elmbrook’s vision is likewise bold and unashamed, a banner of intent as we sail toward 2030.

In turn, let’s look at each of the four strategic objectives that this powerful passage presents:



F: FUTURE FOCUSED

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!” (2 Corinthians 5:17)

Historical Context: The City of Two Lives

Understanding Corinth helps us grasp Paul’s message. This strategic isthmus city lived two lives: “Classical” Corinth thrived for centuries before being destroyed by Romans around 146 BC. It remained uninhabited until Julius Caesar rebuilt it a century later.

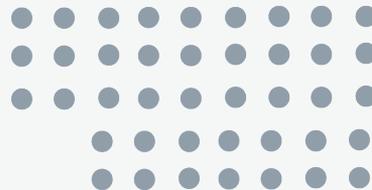
With this grand reopening came a tide of newness and optimism. “Neo-Corinth” became known as a place for second chances. Here former slaves and those seeking fresh starts could find new beginnings.

Paul’s words about the old passing away and the new coming would have resonated deeply with first-century Corinthians who understood their city as a center of renewal.

Learning from Isaiah

At many points, Paul’s vision in 2 Corinthians 5 echoes the wording of Isaiah 40-55. In a particular way, verse 17 reprises Isaiah 43:18-19: *“Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past,”* cries the ancient prophet. *“See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?”*

But his enthusiasm about the future does not mean that Isaiah entirely dismisses the past. Just a few verses earlier, Isaiah references the Red Sea crossing—an event nearly a millennium in the past. In doing so, the prophet balances forward focus with historical awareness. In the same way, Elmbrook must honor the past without dwelling in it. We celebrate what God has done while eagerly anticipating what comes next.



THREE DIMENSIONS OF FUTURE FOCUS

1. Personal Formation

Every believer in Jesus is a new creation being renewed day by day. We will invest in spiritual growth across all ages—kids, students, young adults, and leaders. We believe God loves each person as they are but loves them too much to leave them there.

Could Elmbrook become *the Church of Second Chances*?

2. Congregational Perspective

Elmbrook isn't as large as it once was. Many of the numerical measurements reflect loss: Fewer members, smaller services, streamlined programs, a scaled-back budget. There is a lot to lament in our story.

But like the returning exiles in Ezra 3:10-12, we look ahead with hope. When the foundation for the second Jerusalem temple was laid, some people wept because it was smaller than the first. Yet all the people praised because it remained the house of the Lord.

God is laying a new foundation for a new generation among us.

Churches flourish when they believe they have a shared and sure future. People volunteer, give, and pray because they're investing in a bright tomorrow. Instead of introducing ourselves by how long we've been at Elmbrook, let's say how long we plan to stay!

3. Cosmic Renewal

Paul believed that with Christ's death and resurrection, God had begun a new era in history. He is restoring all things so that there is always more to discover.

SPAIN ONCE INSCRIBED HER COINS WITH “NE PLUS ULTRA”—“NO MORE BEYOND”—MARKING THE STRAITS OF GIBRALTAR AS THE FINAL FRONTIER. BUT WHEN COLUMBUS SAILED PAST IN 1492, THEY WERE COMPELLED TO REMOVE THE NEGATIVE, LEAVING “PLUS ULTRA”—“MORE BEYOND.”

Our message to a world wearied by assassinations, school shootings, cancer diagnoses, and international strife is that there *is* more beyond. In Revelation 21:5, Jesus decrees “Behold, I am making everything new!” We must stay in the battle, honor the lost, care for the brokenhearted, and cling to tomorrow’s news when today’s headlines feel overwhelming.

L: LOVE DIRECTED



The Question of Motives

Outcomes matter and results are significant, but everything begins with motives. People in our world today are experts in detecting manipulation.

If we desire compelling witness in our era, we must be clear about our goals. We must demonstrate that we’re not using the gospel as a tool to take things from people, but as a gift to offer new life to them.

Paul’s Complicated Relationship with Corinth

Second Corinthians is probably the fourth letter Paul wrote to this troubled congregation. There was an earlier letter referenced in 1 Corinthians 5:9, then the sixteen-chapter First Corinthians addressing some twenty distinct problems. This was followed by the “Letter of Tears” (mentioned in 2 Corinthians 2:3 and 7:8). The book we call Second Corinthians came last.

Despite endless difficulties, abuse, criticism, and hurt, Paul kept returning to Corinth. Why? The answer is singular and clear: The Directive Love of Christ

“For Christ’s love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.” (2 Corinthians 5:14-15)

In this passage, “Christ’s love” doesn’t mean Paul’s love for Christ; it refers to Christ’s love for him. His relentless work wasn’t to win Jesus’ affection—it was Paul’s response to having already received it.

Here's why this matters: Paul isn't just going along with a program, as in *"Since God loves me, I suppose I should probably love others."* Rather, Paul is pointing out that we actually can't love others authentically until we know that God loves us. But when the beauty and richness of God's love truly hits us, everything changes.

THREE TRANSFORMATIONS IN CHRIST'S LOVE

1. We Worry Less About Others' Opinions

Paul acknowledges that he's so passionate about the gospel that people called him "out of his mind" (2 Corinthians 5:13). He didn't concern himself with social conventions or his reputation on social media. When we understand what Christ's love says about us, our public rating becomes unimportant. Eternal destinies matter more.

2. We Stop Seeing People as Means to Ends

"So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view," says verse 16.

Corinthian critics complained that Paul wasn't "alpha" enough—not physically impressive, not boisterous, not commanding like the "Super-Apostles" they admired. His humility discredit him in the eyes of many.

But Paul refused a power-based pastorate because ministry through brute force leads to abuse. When you're on a pedestal looking down on a congregation, people become items to control, connections to network, dollars to collect, or hours to exploit. That's the "worldly point of view"; if you don't really love people, *you only love what they can give you.*

Paul realized that bossing people around could bring nothing better than what he already had in Jesus' love. His dream was for others to know that same love.

3. We Accept the Pain of Ministry

Long after he could have quit, Paul kept serving. Christ's love "compelled" him—the Greek word *synechei* means "hemmed in" or "walled in," like a kayaker in a canyon that is both carried along by the rapids and

constrained by the cliffs. Jesus' love both propelled Paul forward and prevented him from pursuing other objectives.

Church involvement presents many pressures but also enticing rewards. We might serve in order to experience good feelings, to gain recognition, to alleviate guilt, or to avoid necessary self-examination. But an emphasis on love from Jesus and love for others precludes us from pursuing these self-centered causes.

THE APPLICATION TO ELMBROOK

Many have left American churches due to disillusionment with congregations' messy, mixed-up motives. Unless we lay down our own personal wants and soak in Jesus' transforming love, we'll veer off course. We need to be hemmed in by love.

Being Love Directed means we're clearer on our cause, less anxious about accessories, hiding no agendas. When people sense authentic love poured out by those who've received it themselves, the ministry of reconciliation flourishes. It truly won't be about us anymore—it will be all about Him.



ENTRANCE

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A: APOLOGETICALLY PREPARED

Redefining Apology

When many people hear the word “apologetic” they think of expressing remorse. But the word’s earliest sense meant “to defend an idea”. It implied standing up for something despite the doubts of others.

Paul had skeptics and cynics in Corinth, but rather than roll over or give in, he stood up for his faith.

The Book of Acts records six instances of him persuading others. He wanted to win hearts and change minds because Paul knew the gospel is meant to be shared. 2 Corinthians 5 stresses this urgency: “We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God... I tell you, *now* is the time of God’s favor, *now* is the day of salvation.” (2 Corinthians 5:20; 6:2)

Removing the Blue String

Growing up as a preacher’s kid, I remember the The Blue String—a shoelace-thick cord that ushers used to rope off the back pews of our sanctuary. That blue string symbolizes how people with doubts feel today—they feel roped off from church because congregations won’t engage their tough questions.

Being Apologetically Prepared means doing better. It means welcoming wonder, providing resources to process curiosity and skepticism, and engaging the top reasons Americans cite for not believing in God: intellectual credibility in a scientific age, institutional church failings, shifting social issue opinions, and negative personal experiences with churchgoers.

The good news is that we don’t have to make up anything new; the scriptures provide all of the resources that we need. A robust and well-rounded Biblical worldview holds out a hopeful vision for the future that is confident in Jesus Christ and compassionate toward the concerns of our age.

1 Peter 3:15-16 reminds us that persuasion is grounded in gentleness and respect: The world constantly looks for reasons to dismiss the gospel; the easiest way for them to ignore the message is to discredit the messenger. If we share faith with kindness, patience, and grace, accusations about Christians being arrogant or pushy fall flat.

2. Cultural Apologetics

This line of thinking asks: *What might our lives and societies look like if Christianity were true? What clues in lived social experience point to the gospel's importance?*

Think about it: Why do people want happy movie endings rather than sad or unresolved ones? Why can certain music spiritually transport us? Why do we believe society strengthens by protecting the handicapped rather than eliminating them?

Tim Keller's paradigm exemplified this. Keller engaged culture's movements by saying: "Yes, but no, but yes." First, affirm the longing—you want the right thing (love, meaning, joy). Then, name the lie—you're probably looking in the wrong place. Finally, point to the Lord—satisfaction is available through Jesus. Cultures are restless, searching for some vision that pulls all of these instincts into a unified explanation. That hope is realized in relationship with Jesus Christ.

3. Narrative Apologetics

This involves sharing our personal stories. In narrative apologetics, we bravely tell the mighty deeds of God in our lives.

We must stop being ashamed of our journeys. Authenticity matters more than perfection. It's okay to admit it: We're not where we want to be, but we're not where we were, because God is working on us.

Storytelling was common practice for earliest evangelists. Everyone who saw the resurrected Jesus told others about their encounters with him. Peter was honest about Jesus forgiving his sin. Paul shared his Damascus Road conversion with anyone who'd listen.

Gilgal's memorial stones offered an opportunity for this (Joshua 4). When their descendants asked, "What do these stones mean?" the Israelites were to tell their salvation story. In our increasingly broken world, committed Christian lives look like standing stones. When people ask, "Why are you the way you are?" we must be prepared to share who we are, who we've been, and who Jesus is making us to be.

This isn't just a job for trained clergy. It's a task to which we're all called. Recent Barna research found that only 22% of non-Christians find pastors trustworthy. Glenn Packiam puts it this way: Pastors are largely "peripheral and ornamental. Quaint, but not entirely necessary. Kind, but not wholly credible."¹ Evangelism happens best laterally: person-to-person rather than pulpit-to-pew.

4. Sacrificial Apologetics

Francis Schaeffer called Christian love “The Final Apologetic.” If we want others to believe what we believe, we will need to live cruciform, sacrificial lives. We must be willing to pay the ultimate price—as Christians always have been—to stand for truth in an age of deception.

THE FATHER’S CRY: “HELP MY UNBELIEF”

Mark 9 recounts Jesus encountering a desperate father whose son suffered demonic torment. Jesus said, “All things are possible to those who believe.” The father cried with tears, “Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!” (Mark 9:24)

We’re all like that father. Do we believe in Jesus? *Absolutely*. Do we still battle doubts? *All the time*. Even pastors waver.

Being Apologetically Prepared means acknowledging we all believe in something *and* we all carry pockets of uncertainty. We all need help for our unbelief. Jesus doesn’t scold the man for uncertainty or condemn his doubts. He lifts the blue cord and invites him to see His goodness.

ELMBROOK’S COMMITMENT

Moving forward, we’ll chip away at obstacles to belief by:

- Inviting skeptics to learn with us
- Hosting training events and community forums
- Developing new formats for conversational teaching
- Preparing youth to stand strong in cynical times
- Equipping members to share their stories

We must accomplish this with Joshua’s confidence, Peter’s gentleness, and Paul’s urgency. Because today is the day of salvation.



THE EARTH BEGAN TO SHAKE
AND THE VEIL WAS TORN



PORTAGE MBX

“We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us.” (2 Corinthians 5:20)

The Vision of Antioch

If Elmbrook could be the best organization in the world at one thing, what would it be?

I believe we can become one of the leading churches in our region—perhaps our nation—for global integration.

We have deep, long commitment to being a linking place between the American church and the international Christian family.

In the ancient world, that junction was Antioch. Antioch received people from many races, languages, and backgrounds, then sent them out for the gospel’s sake. It was a globally integrated church.

My dream is that Elmbrook can be the Antioch of the Midwest in the years ahead.

The Irony of Going Global to Solve Local Problems

We’ve already mentioned how the Four D’s are weighing on the hearts and souls of people close to us. In a heaven-sent twist, some of the biggest problems our neighbors have with the Church can be resolved by re-envisioning Christianity globally. Many of our issue start begin when we think mostly about ourselves; salvation follows from seeing our part in a grander story, our role in a timeless epic.

Paul: The Bridge-Builder

More than any other biblical leader, Paul felt called to be a connector of perspectives and a bridge between cultures. He identified as one of “Christ’s Ambassadors.”

An ambassador is an envoy from one place to another, a representative of one nation to its neighbor. Paul summarizes in 2 Corinthians 5:20 what he fleshes out in the other 2,032 New Testament verses he wrote. He was an emissary from the throne room of heaven deployed to God’s children in the world.

The Beauty of Grace

In the ancient world, ambassadors always went from weaker nations to stronger ones. Small, dependent envoys regularly pleaded for assistance from powerful overlords. But here, in beautiful instance of grace, God—the stronger party—moves toward the world in need.

Paul was a spiritual ambassador (heaven to humanity), an ethnic ambassador (Judaism to Gentiles), and a geographic ambassador (Asia to Europe). His lifework centered on connecting people. His was a ministry of reconciliation—bringing together what had been separated.

MISSIONAL RECIPROCITY: TWO-WAY MOVEMENT

Paul’s groundbreaking vision for global church unity was both spiritual and practical. In 2 Corinthians 8-9, he requests money from Gentile churches in Greece to help Jewish churches in Jerusalem. He was working on his “Harvest Fund”!

Our financial commitments speak loudly about our priorities. While many churches donate 10% of offerings to missions, Elmbrook’s percentage last year was 26%. Our Harvest Fund epitomizes what we believe: God has called us to strongly support the church in other nations.

The need for this generosity is great. Nearly 44% of our planet’s 8.5 billion people survive on under \$7 daily. Seven hundred million live on less than \$2.15ⁱⁱ. And 2.3 billion people have yet to hear the gospel in their own languageⁱⁱⁱ. We have Bibles everywhere and money for new iPhones every other year. We need to help.

But missional reciprocity also implies receiving contributions *from* the international faith family. This is what most churches miss—the opportunity to sit in a learner’s posture.

SEVEN WAYS GLOBAL INTEGRATION STRENGTHENS US

1. Enlightens Our Understanding of Contemporary Christianity

Paul wrote in Colossians: “Here there is no Gentile or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.” (Colossians 3:11)

He could have simply written “Christ is in all,” but he lists different kinds of people to help Colossians recognize that within God’s family, there are lots of non-Colossians. We need similar reminders.

As of 2010, 60% of Christians live in the Global South—up from 20% in 1910. These southern siblings possess only 35% of the Church’s resources, but they comprise 60% of the family. Latin America has officially surpassed Europe as the continent with most Christians. Researchers project Africa will surpass Latin America by 2050, and Asia could surpass Africa by 2100^{iv}.

2. Strengthens Our Local Programs and Practices

For a long time, those of us in the West considered ourselves a “City on a Hill” shining into a dimmed world. But evidence says we’re actually lagging behind in faith-sharing, discipling, and group growth. Our stress is leadership development; in other countries, it’s followership development. From our international friends, we have much to learn about worship as participatory experience of words, sacraments, conversation, and mutual encouragement.

3. Widens Our Perspective on Social and Theological Issues

Many unexamined “westernisms” exist in our theology. We have specific views on hermeneutics, anthropology, government, economics, and relationships. We have views about identity, work, and family that depart significantly from global norms. We believe our learning style is the only way, but it isn’t.

4. Heightens Our Appreciation for Freedom of Worship

Ours is a place where we’re the majority. We have broad freedoms to gather, speak, and worship. Many believers worldwide live differently. In their Christian-minority contexts, many are shunned or persecuted for practicing their faith. They face imprisonment and death. These brothers and sisters need our prayer support and advocacy.

5. Deepens Our Prayer Lives

We’ll understand better what “Thy Kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven” means when we see Jesus’ movement as a worldwide project. We’ll become broader intercessors. We’ll learn to repent for arrogance toward and ignorance about our spiritual siblings’ needs. We’ll find new things for which to be thankful.

6. Upends Our Assumptions About Spirituality

First, we'll rethink the spiritual warfare we're in. We don't talk much about angels, demons, powers, principalities, exorcisms, and healings. But the church elsewhere engages these entities constantly.

Second, Pentecostal worship—known for its expressiveness and openness to the Spirit—is the norm in much of the global church. The Spirit moves in ways that may differ from our own experience or preference, and we have much to learn by catching those winds as we sail where the Spirit leads.

7. Refines Our Vision of Eternity

Revelation 7:9 says that in the end we'll live in community with people from every tongue, tribe, and nation. Many picture heaven as a parlor with loved ones; instead, we should picture a city with a multinational feast. Eternity will be going to be an ethnic and cultural fair!

UNDERSTANDING LOVE'S FULL DIMENSIONS

Ephesians 3:14-19 reveals why this matters:

“For this reason, I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, **together with all the Lord's holy people**, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.”

John Stott comments on Ephesians 3 this way:

“We shall have power to comprehend these dimensions of Christ's love, Paul adds, only *with all the saints*... The isolated Christian can indeed know something of Jesus' love but his or her grasp is bound to be limited by their limited experience. It needs the whole people of God to understand the whole love of God, all the saints together... with all their varied backgrounds and experiences.”^v

We never fully “get it” until we “get it globally”.

REVER
THE GRAVE

EXIT

EXIT



CONCLUSION: THE MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION

Navigate2030 is not just about the good of others or the growth of Elmbrook—it's ultimately about the glory of God.

We believe and confess that there is a true story giving the clue to the meaning of the whole human and cosmic story, because God chose a people to bear the meaning of the whole story. This is the story the Bible tells, centered in the incarnation, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Our task is to tell this story.

AS WE SAIL ONWARD, CROSS BRAVELY OVER, AND MAKE BOLD NEW COMMITMENTS, THE CENTER OF OUR HOPE REMAINS UNCHANGED: IN JESUS CHRIST, GOD IS RECONCILING A LOST AND BROKEN WORLD TO HIMSELF. THE OLD, RUGGED CROSS WILL FOREVER BE OUR BANNER. AND IT IS UNDER THIS FLAG THAT ELMBROOK CHURCH TAKES ITS STAND.

PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION

As of January 1, we are:

- Reconstituting a Board of Deacons so elders can provide more spiritual oversight.
- Taking 40 Sundays in the coming year to reclaim biblical worldview through Genesis-to-Revelation immersion.
- Developing a ministry of testimonies.
- Planning our budget to align with these priorities.
- Building staff and volunteer teams with clearer outcomes.

PERSONAL AND COLLECTIVE COMMITMENT

Our vision must be discerned together but owned as individuals. This invitation is both collective—because we aren’t a church if we’re not united—and personal. Each member is invited to:

- Become more **FUTURE FOCUSED**—honoring where we’ve been while pressing on toward what God has ahead.
- Be **LOVE DIRECTED**—as parents, friends, coworkers, letting Christ’s love be the primary motive.
- Grow **APOLOGETICALLY PREPARED**—ready to talk to skeptical classmates, coworkers, and neighbors with hope and articulation.
- Embrace being **GLOBALLY INTEGRATED**—hungering to know more about our worldwide family.

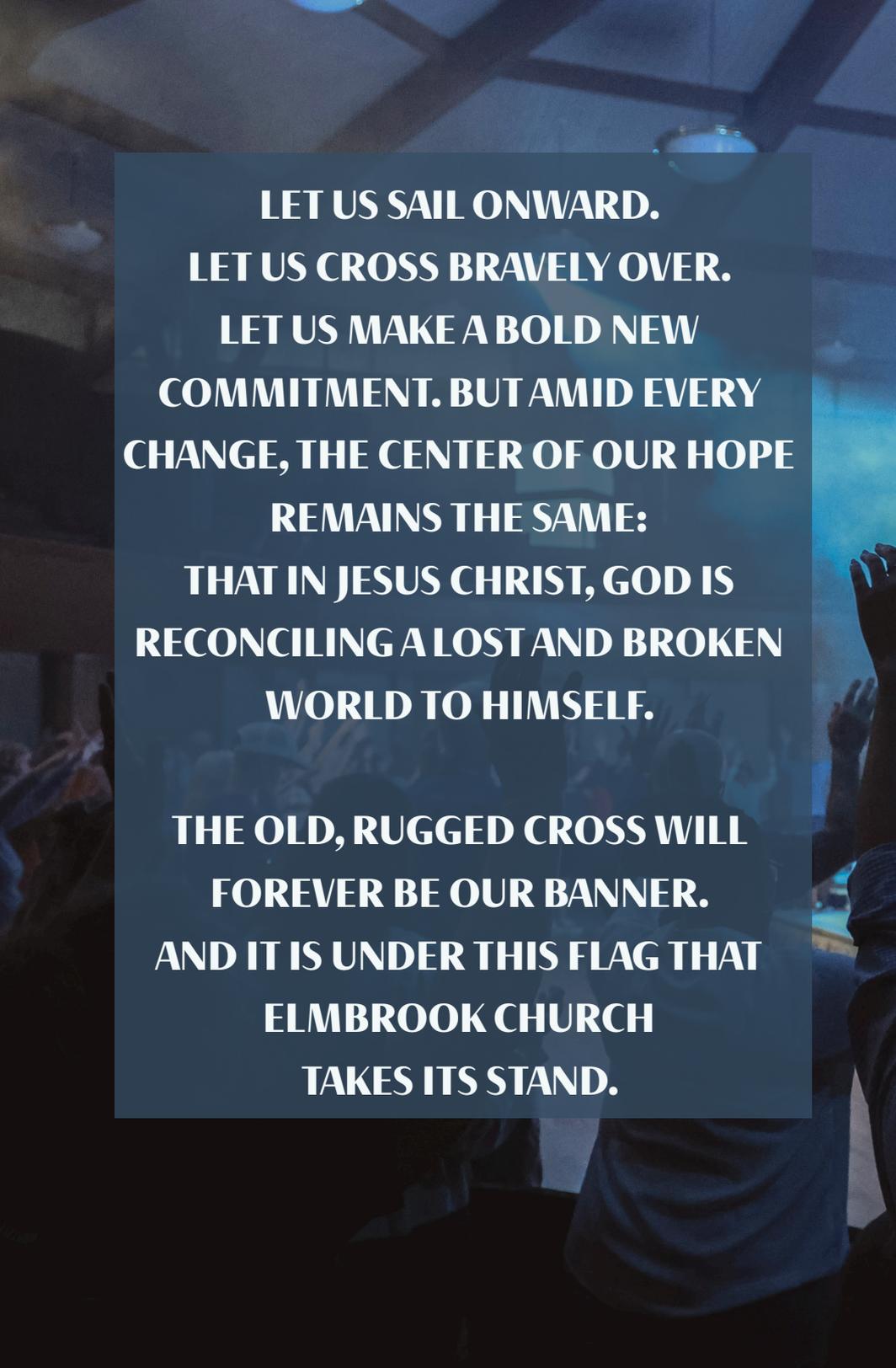
Trusting the Spirit’s Leading

We don’t claim Navigate2030 is the only way God could work. If He leads differently, we’ll adapt. We won’t break into Bithynia with a battering ram and we won’t row where the Spirit won’t blow. But we feel conviction about this, friends. We believe we have a meaningful part to play in God’s call to reconciliation.

The Gospel at the Center

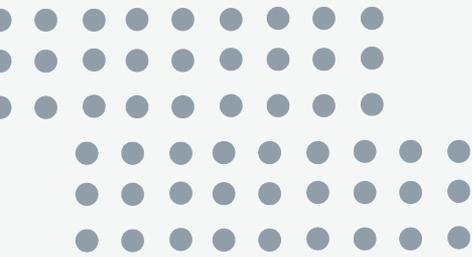
Good news always travels best through stories. What God is up to—while shareable through poetry and philosophy—is always best told in people. Through all hardships and long odds, we will continue to be storytellers.

Within and beneath every human need is the need for the gospel. As Lesslie Newbigin has written: “We believe and confess that there is a true story that gives the clue to the meaning of the whole human and cosmic story. This is the story the Bible tells, with its center in the incarnation, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Our task is to tell this story.”^{vi}

A church service with a blue-tinted background. In the foreground, the backs of several people's heads and shoulders are visible, some with their hands raised in prayer. The background shows a church interior with a grid ceiling and a bright light source on the right. A large, semi-transparent dark blue rectangle is centered over the image, containing white text.

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THAT IN JESUS CHRIST, GOD IS
RECONCILING A LOST AND BROKEN
WORLD TO HIMSELF.**

**THE OLD, RUGGED CROSS WILL
FOREVER BE OUR BANNER.
AND IT IS UNDER THIS FLAG THAT
ELMBROOK CHURCH
TAKES ITS STAND.**



i <https://www.barna.com/research/pastors-trustworthy-reliable/>

ii <https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/poverty-prosperity-and-planet>

iii Jason Mandryk, *Operation World* p. 10

iv <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2s1Q3rQzNWc>

v John Stott, *God's New Society: The Message of Ephesians* (InterVarsity, 1979), p. 137:

vi Leslie Newbiggin, 'Way Out West: The Gospel in a Post-Enlightenment World.'



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