

Life Giving Ministries

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This is a new and exciting season at Valley Vineyard. (In case, you hadn't noticed). This season has awakened our imaginations and expectation for the way ahead. We have heard a lot of commentary around how fast God is moving, and how exciting it is to be involved in a cutting edge church community such as ours. However, with opportunities such as these, we also face great challenges. We want to be ready to meet these challenges well. So, let me paint a broad historical picture, in order to get a quick overview of where we have come from. I hope that in doing this, we will have a strong sense of who we are as a church, so that we can interpret the current setting well. (For a full outline of our history, please visit our website www.valleyvineyard.org.za)

Historical Setting

In our early years, our identity was characterized by the phrase: *"a community to heal the community"*. Our vision evolved over the years but we retained a strong sense of being a "hospital" for a broken community. The Lord had told us to minister specifically to those who were poor in relationships, poor in family, and poor in spirit.

Under Alexander Venter, our mission statement evolved even further: *To Embody the Love of Jesus: A Community of Home Churches in Mission*. There were five values that undergirded our mission and vision: Following God, Forming Community, Fishing World, Fitting Context, and Freeing Love.

The Current Setting

We have not moved far from these life-giving guidelines: We continue to be:

- A community of wounded healers
- A church that loves to Worship God because He is God.
- A multigenerational and a multicultural church
- A church that is defined by a heart for the poor
- An equipping, training and sending church
- A church that extends the Kingdom of God through acts of kindness done with great love
- A church that extends mercy and grace to the least, lost and the lonely

Our identity has not changed. In fact, we have stated along the same lines that Valley Vineyard is very keen to see God's people released and empowered to live lives of love and service so that God's Kingdom comes on earth as it is in heaven. However, the second aspect of our identity; *A Community of Home Churches in Mission*, has suffered under the pressure of surviving in the Gauteng jungle. This is not a commentary on our spiritual maturity. It is however, a commentary on the challenges facing us. Relationships have been the main tool that God has used to transform our lives into Christ-likeness. It is in our Home Groups where our people developed a strong sense of belonging, where we were integrated into the life of the Church, and where we were mobilized into our God-given arena of ministry.

The time has come for us to shift our focus and do the same thing in a different way, hence the desire to officially launch the concept of Life-Groups within the concept of Life-Giving ministries. Our home-groups that are operating well are still the ideal; however, these life-groups will add the needed support to enable us to take care of our goals in our shifting life-styles.

Life-Groups.

A Life group is a gathering of people who meet regularly around a shared interest/ministry. The leaders of these groups however, are passionate about the spiritual status of the group members. It is their heart to create a setting around the shared interest, where members can encourage and support one another on their spiritual journey. Life groups are a place to do life together: living, learning, eating, playing, and resting together. Groups are encouraged to not just be about business? But to include community-oriented activities like sharing a meal together, serving together, and having fun! These groups can range from ministry groups, such as worship teams, to women’s ministry groups or even shared experience groups, such as support for families around those suffering with a bi-polar condition.

We are convinced more than ever that the best place for spiritual growth is in a small group of caring people especially if that is the heart and the intent of the group. These are the places where we can grow into Christ likeness through the inward journey and through outward action.

Please indicate in the box below, the types of small **life-group** that would interest you. Please also indicate if you would be willing to take leadership of such a group:

Name: _____ Date: _____

	Life-group description	Can you offer leadership to this group? Yes/No
<input type="checkbox"/>	i.e. Women’s Group	
<input type="checkbox"/>	i.e. Heartworks	
<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>		
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<input type="checkbox"/>		

Life-Giving Ministries.

We also want to set up appropriate structures, so that we can pastor these groups. As you engage with or lead these groups, you will come across sometimes overwhelming need that you will need help with. We want to be there to connect regularly with you, or to make sure that you have access to the right kind of support when these needs become apparent.

The idea is to build a network of people who are equipped/becoming equipped, within specific fields of support. I have listed a few ideas below. Please indicate in the boxes provided if you would be interested in any of these or add more in the “other” category provided.

As part of our support strategy, we will give training and regular input; provide access for debriefing and a setting to share anonymously and responsibly, so that we provide the best forms of support.

Here are some initial thoughts on areas where you can register your interest/desire to offer support. Please check the box/boxes alongside your category of interest:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Life-giving support description	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	Life-giving support description	X
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Visitation		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Spiritual Formation	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Counselling		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Care Response Team	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Practical Care		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Post Trauma Care	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Healing Prayer		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Deliverance	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Spiritual Warfare		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Addictions	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Premarital support		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Marital Support	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Teenagers/youth counselling		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Parental Guidance	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Listening Ministry		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Substance abuse	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Compulsive Disorders		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Bipolar support	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Finances		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sexual/relational problems	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unemployment		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Life skills Training	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Stress Management		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other	

If you have checked the other box, please give more detail here. _____
