

On Our Purpose

Huntingdon Alliance Youth Ministry exists to **CARE** for non-Christian students in practical ways, **COMMUNICATE** the Good News of Jesus among them, **CONNECT** receptive ones with other Christians, and **COACH** believing ones to **CELEBRATE** God in every area of their lives.

Matthew 22:37-39

Jesus replied, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"

Matthew 28:18-20

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Every person on the planet is on a spiritual journey whether they realize it or not. Regardless of where individuals find themselves on that journey, God's desire is that they would move closer and closer to Him. We desire to both participate and perpetuate that process. That's why our purpose statement incorporates a progression of spiritual commitment.

1. There are non-Christian students who need God's truth demonstrated tangibly before they will even listen to the message of Christ, and so we will **CARE** for them in very real and practical ways. Meeting needs is a primary way of showing students that God *has* entered into the physical world and moved on their behalf. Just as Jesus was made "real" to us by becoming a human being, so we will be incarnational about our ministry toward students, especially non-Christian students who have closed themselves off to the claims of Christ. And when we CARE for them, we will truly CARE for them with no ulterior motive and regardless of how they may treat us or whether they seem receptive to the claims of Christ. ('Love your neighbor as yourself.' See also Luke 10:25-37; Mark 12:28-34; Php. 2:5-11)
2. There are those students who are no longer closed to the claims of Christ, but who have simply not had the Gospel explained in a way they can truly understand, and so we will **COMMUNICATE** the Good News of Jesus among them. This means we must understand the language(s), communication style(s), and the engaging influences of students, and we must be able to express the Good News of Jesus with significant fluency using these tools. We must know what to say and what not to say and still be faithful to the message of Christ. ('make disciples of all nations' See 1 Cor. 9:19-23)
3. There are students who have heard and understood the claims of Christ and who are either at the point of decision to believe or reject them or at a point of infancy in their new life with Christ. The great need for them is to be part of a community or family of people who are also in relationship with Christ, and so we will **CONNECT** those who are receptive to the claims of Christ with other Christians. This is not simply hanging out with one another, it is much deeper than that. It involves identifying oneself with the death and resurrection of Christ – hence the Body of Christ – joining together with Him openly through a community of Christian believers. Biblically, the visible and practical mode of doing this was through water baptism. Sharing in the Lord's Supper was also an important connection point to the Christ and His Body. These will also be part of our effort to **CONNECT** receptive ones with other Christians. ('Baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit')
4. There are students who have believed the claims of Christ and recognize their need to be conformed to His image. They have committed themselves to be His disciples – learners – and therefore we will **COACH** these believing ones in their pursuit to gratify the Spirit instead of their own sinful natures. We will observe, advise, encourage, challenge, cheer them on, and most importantly we'll delight with them in their successes and help them back up when they fall. ('Teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you')
5. There are students who truly live with Jesus Christ and whom He has equipped for ministry. These are students who have come to know that they are not their own, that they were bought with a price. These are students who perceive the unimaginable size of God's multi-dimensional love and mercy and are compelled to offer their bodies as living sacrifices to God. These students will **CELEBRATE** God with their lives by caring for non-Christian students in practical ways, communicating the Good News of Jesus among them, connecting receptive ones with other Christians, and coaching believing ones to also celebrate God with *their* lives. These students will have a sense of purpose in the Kingdom of God, and therefore will serve as ambassadors for Christ long after they have graduated from high school. ('Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind' See also Rom. 12:1-3)