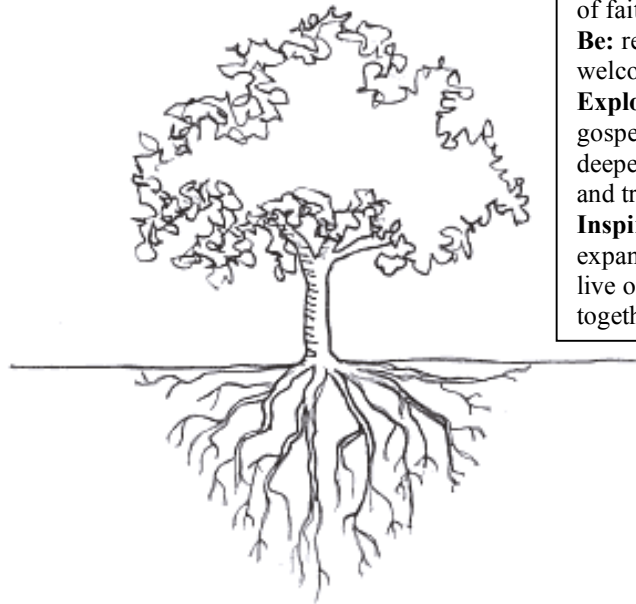




## Year Three: Season of Growth



### **Bearing Fruit**

A growing community of faith that:

**Be:** reflects God's welcoming embrace.

**Explore:** explores the gospel message together, deepening in knowledge and trust of God.

**Inspire Life:** has expanding impact as we live out the gospel together.

### **Deepening Roots**

**Distribution of Ownership:** investment of time, sharing of talents, generosity with money, ownership of the vision and mission of Engage.

**Development of Leaders:** Equipping and Refreshing current leaders and Calling new leaders.

**Positioning for Maximum Community Impact:** identifying and equipping smaller communities within Engage that share an awakened spirituality and common missional calling.

**Deepened faith in Christ:** help people to examine their faith, identify clear areas of growth and move toward deeper relationship with God that results in life transformation.

## **Winter 2011: A Season of Growth**

We tend to think of winter as a time to hunker down and survive while dreaming of fairer weather. The truth is there's much that happens in these cold dark months. As Parker Palmer suggests, "Despite all appearances nature is not dead in winter – it has gone underground to renew itself and prepare for spring. Winter is a time when we are admonished, and even inclined, to do the same for ourselves." Important things are happening in the dark and cold that prepare us for the new growth and abundance of spring. As a church body, we're looking to this season as a time to grow in depth and strength in preparation for a season of renewed growth and outreach.

### **What Are We Asking?**

We're asking you to prayerfully consider your role in **moving our church community from a "plant" to a tree deeply rooted in God's love and grace** that bears long-lasting fruits of hope, and transformation.

### **What Does This Mean For Me?**

This is a defining season for the Engage community. As a church plant, we knew that year 3 would require significant growth in finances, leadership, and faith. As we enter a new year, we find ourselves looking to the past for insight and to the future with expectation. We find ourselves asking, "What has Engage meant to me?" "What kind of church do I believe God's calling Engage to become?"

This is a defining season for the Engage community.

Many have invested deeply in planting Engage. We've cultivated, fertilized, planted and watered the seeds of a new faith community. The depth of God's investment in Engage and our own commitment call us to continued dedication to its growth and health. Many have sensed God's presence through Engage. Many are excited to see the future God's preparing for Engage. If this describes you, then **we're asking you to join us as we recommit to care for the growth and health of Engage.** God's calling for gardeners (caretakers?) to tend the community of Engage and steward it to greater fruitfulness. Our commitment will involve risk, challenge, and opportunity and will hinge on God's ongoing faithfulness to us.

To become a healthy tree that bears fruit, Engage needs to grow deep roots. We believe God is calling us to grow deep roots of financial commitment, sacrificial service, and embodied faith. We're trusting God as we move forward, seeking for the provision of an additional \$42,000 of support, for clearly called and committed leaders, and for a deepening sense of reliance on and relationship with God. Gardening is often dirty, difficult, and unpredictable work. Yet we believe that those who commit to tend this community will be changed by the challenges. As we partner with God and each other we will stretched and transformed by God. Our commitment and God's faithfulness will provide opportunities for change and growth as we grow deep roots.

### **Count me in – Where do I Start?**

**January 7**

#### **Leaders and Influencers Gathering:**

Celebrate what God has been doing in your heart while sharing your hopes and dreams for Engage as we move forward. Break bread together with your church family while preparing for a community-wide visioning night later in the month. You'll be asked to consider what leadership role you

might play in our Season of Growth both in terms of finances and service.

**January 22 Engage Visioning:** A community-wide discussion of what God's done through Engage in the past two years while articulating His call for us in year 3 and beyond. We'll celebrate lives that have been touched through the Engage community and point to the needs of the church moving forward.

**January 23 – February 27 Season of Prayer:** Walk with us through a reflective Prayer Guide as an individual, as a couple, and/or as a community. This time will focus on asking God to prepare our hearts to be moved into the "uncomfortable" position of relying on Him completely as we grow in our understanding of who God is and what that means for our lives. Several group prayer times will be coordinated throughout this season.

**Jan 23, Feb 6 20, and Mar 6 Heart Messages:** Hear powerful 5 minute interviews from people who've had their world shaken by the Gospel. These interviews will lay a foundation for what God has done at Engage and what He is calling us to in the future.

**February 27 – March 27 Season of Community:** Discussion guides will be available to lead Community Groups and families through exploring a personal and corporate vision of calling to both service and financial giving. Together we'll ask, "How has God gifted me and how can my gifts be used at Engage?" And "In what ways might I be willing to sacrifice financially in order to help Engage meet its Year 3 financial commitments?"

**April 3 –**

**Season of Celebration:** As we approach Easter, our focus will be on God's power to resurrect lives, communities, and hearts. We'll share stories of how God has moved during the past 60 days to bring deliverance from societal and financial idols as we celebrate the redemptive freedom offered through the cross.

**What Can I Do Today?**

**Pray** for the leaders of the church. Pray for discernment to God's calling through this season. Pray that the Gospel will spill out of all that we do at Engage in a provocative and compelling way.

**Serve** during this season. We need a prayer coordinator, graphic designer, meal coordinator, and Leadership Team liaison for this journey. This is on top of the Community Group leaders, AV and Sound volunteers, Set Up / Tear Down team members, and Engage Kids helps that we already need on an ongoing basis. Ask God to help you see how your gifts might align with these needs, then step out in faith!

**Give** consider increasing your giving by making a 12 month goal and commitment, giving a one-time cash gift, or by the transferring an asset. Get creative and ask others to join you in making small sacrifices that will allow you to give more and grow in community.

**Connect** with others – start on-line and face-to-face conversations about this season of growth. Use this season as an opportunity to deepen community and journey with others both through shared needs and hopes.