

FBC Student Ministry fulfills the FBC Mission by helping students to live the best kind of life—the life God made us to live.

But what does that mean?

We **empower students** to live the best kind of life **now and in the future** by taking **the unique opportunity** to give them the **age-specific resources and environments** they need to be able to **discover and grow** their Identity, Belonging and Mission.

"**Empowering students**" is built on the idea that a youth minister is not a person who ministers to youth, but someone who empowers youth to minister to the world. Our end goal isn't just that our students are transformed by the gospel, but that in Jesus their lives become a means by which God transforms the world.

"**Now and in the future**" emphasizes that our goal is that a student's experience in FBCS is about where they are at today, but also about who they are becoming and how they will live their life in the future. We address the issues they're dealing with today, but never at the exclusion of experiences that will transform them for a lifetime.

When we look at our students, we don't just see kids and teenagers, we see the college students, the parents, the employees and bosses, the homeowners, the retirees and everything else they're becoming as they grow and continue living their lives.

"**The unique opportunity**" is adolescence, and "**age-specific**" describes that the methods we use are in the language of and can be understood by fifth and sixth graders, seventh and eighth graders, and high schoolers. Our students are at the age where everything that happens now deeply affects the rest of their lives,

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whether they know it or not. Everything they interact with, every relationship they have, and every choice they make becomes a part of who they are and changes the course of their life.

"Resources and environments" refer to what we are actually responsible for doing in the lives of students during such an important part of their lives. We all make choices that result from what we think and feel and what we think and feel result from how we answer fundamental questions about our Identity, Belonging and Mission. But when it comes down to it, we can't make choices for our students and we can't make them live the way we would hope that they live. We also can't make them think or feel the way that we hope they will think and feel. And we can't make them believe what we hope they will believe. We can only give them the resources and environments they need to understand, discover, and grow their Identity, Belonging and Mission. Giving them resources is like planting seeds and providing environments is like watering the seeds, but in the end, we trust that God's Spirit will cause them to grow.

"Discover and grow" is what we want to see students doing. We can't discover and grow for them, we can only inspire it in them. That's why we focus on asking questions. Discovery is a lifelong experience of asking, seeking and testing, always sorting out and holding onto the good. If we can teach students how to ask good questions, they will keep on discovering and keep on growing for the rest of their lives.

"identity, Belonging and Mission" are the way we describe the basic core beliefs of a person. They result from three self-questions that we all seem to be asking all the time, but that are especially important during adolescence: Who am I? What is my place? And Why am I here? Truly discovering answers to those questions takes asking a set of deeper, core-questions: Who is God? What is the Church? and Why was Jesus here?

