



W H E T S T O N E

— C H U R C H —

Church Is:

God's people now living
with Him in His kingdom
and helping other people
live there too.

The Church Is Not:

A building,
a non-profit or
a denomination

At Whetstone Church In Brattleboro, Vermont

We think deeply and talk honestly about life in the kingdom of God.

And what is God's kingdom? Well, it's God in action; God is here and he's acting.

You've got a kingdom too. Everyone has one. That's *you* in action. It comes with being a person.

You Can Bring Your Kingdom Into God's Kingdom.

Persons are responsible to act, to be creative, to rule over things, phones, homes, laptops, relationships... God is now inviting all persons everywhere to make an informed choice to **bring *their* kingdom into *His* kingdom** now and forever. Eternity is now in session. It doesn't start later.

You Could Say Church Is *A School of Eternal Living.*

Church is first and foremost about knowing and following Jesus deeply, intimately and authentically. Our church will always be majorly identified with *being and making disciples* (followers) of Jesus. The Christian is actually a student, a disciple, a lifelong apprentice of Jesus (not of any human teacher).

Our Teacher is Jesus, The Greatest Teacher Who Ever Lived

This means we listen to what Jesus has to say about *disciples*: He invites everyone to be his disciple and he commands his disciples to make disciples of all people. So we focus on what a disciple is: Jesus said *“By this all will know you are my disciples, that you **love** one another.”* John 13:35

So **Love** Is The Mark of A Follower of Jesus

All we do at church relates to love—for God and people. The big thing when we gather or work together is *loving* one another. The central reason for all teaching, prayer, work, serving, friendship, and worship is ***to love one another and everyone we meet.*** The Bible even says: “*God is love.*” 1 John 4:8

What Is Love?

Love is intending and doing the best for someone. Love wills the greatest good. When you choose to love it may or may not mean you enjoy, like or agree with someone. Jesus told us to love even our enemies and pray for people who offend us. God's unchanging love for us is constant.

What The Bible Says About Love:

Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.

1 John 4:7-8

What a *School of Eternal Living* Might Look Like Here In Vermont.

As a church we are learning how to have God involved in our lives in such a way that over time as a faith community we grow together in love. That love spills out into the broader community and reaches all around, touching people's lives and helping them come to *love God with all their heart, soul, mind and strength and love their neighbor as themselves.* Mark 12:30

The Classroom: Our Everyday Life.

Jesus does his best teaching in the classroom of our everyday lives. There is no better place to learn. Three things happen there:

- What God does (He controls).
- What we do (we control).
- What happens to us (we do not control).

Anyone who has ever learned from Jesus has learned in the classroom of everyday experiences. There is no other classroom.

What We Do As A Church

In this community of prayerful love, (that's our church) we cooperate together on developing: *love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness and self-control.* Gal 5:20 This is the fruit of the Spirit of God living in us. This is what you learn at church. These are the most powerful things in life. They are simple and profound and they fit *you* perfectly!

How You Grow This Fruit

- You must *want* this fruit to grow in your life.
- No one can grow it for you.
- You cannot grow it on your own.
- You can only grow healthy within community—not outside of it.

In the church we help one another as we depend on a Holy power not from us. We collaborate with the Holy Spirit and one another to grow this fruit and share it with everyone we meet.

It's Not About Perfection.

Perfection is not the aim. You can be a disciple of Jesus and still be far from perfect. But at least you're growing into the best version of *you* possible—the one Jesus had in mind when he created you! You're actually growing to be more and more like Jesus.

It's A Privilege Freely Given, Not An Achievement Attained.

Being a disciple is not an achievement attained by self-help but a status freely given by Jesus to anyone willing to follow Him. *Anyone*. Following Jesus is the highest privilege a human can have. Anyone willing to experiment with Jesus can follow Him.

Do you feel written-off? Jesus wants to

write you on! [facebook.com/WhetstoneChurch](https://www.facebook.com/WhetstoneChurch)

www.whetstonebratt.com

Love: The Crown Jewel

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵ It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶ Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷ It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. ⁸ Love never fails...

1 Corinthians 13:4-8



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