

The background is a detailed architectural drawing of a Gothic church, showing the east elevation and various interior details. The drawing is rendered in a light blue/gray color on a darker blue background. The main title 'WHY CHURCH?' is written in large, black, outlined letters across the center. Below it, the subtitle 'A LOOK AT WHY WE GATHER' is written in smaller, bold, red, outlined letters. The architectural drawing includes labels such as 'EAST ELEVATION', 'MARBLE FLOOR OF SANCTUARY', 'DETAIL OF TILE FLOORS IN CHURCH VESTIBULES', and '3" DETAIL OF R.I.'. There are also various notes and dimensions scattered throughout the drawing.

WHY CHURCH?

A LOOK AT WHY WE GATHER

**We, The Church, are entrusted with God's
ultimate gift and most urgent mission –
treasuring, living, and sharing the gospel.**

Ephesians 3:8-12

⁸ To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, ⁹ and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things, ¹⁰ so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. ¹¹ This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹² in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him.

Ephesians 3:8-12

⁸ To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, **to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ,** ⁹ and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things, ¹⁰ so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. ¹¹ This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹² in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him.

Ephesians 3:8-12

⁸ To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, ⁹ and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things, ¹⁰ so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. ¹¹ This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹² in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him.

Ephesians 3:8-12

⁸ To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, ⁹ and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things, ¹⁰ **so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known** to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. ¹¹ This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹² in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him.

**The Church is entrusted with the joy
and mystery of God's divine plan.**

The Church is entrusted with the joy and mystery of God's divine plan.

- We point everyone to God's glory
 - It never happens the way we'd expect
- We point to our need for a savior
 - From sin
 - From death
- We point to Jesus as the glorious fulfillment
- We live like we get this

Ephesians 3:8-12

⁸ To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, ⁹ and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things, ¹⁰ so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known **to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places**. ¹¹ This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹² in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him.

The Church is entrusted with the joy and mystery of God's divine plan.

- The Church is bigger than our finite understanding
 - This is eternal
 - EVERYONE is watching

**The Church is made up of people
who are not divine.**

The Church is made up of people who are not divine.

- The founders were flawed
 - Peter
 - Paul + Ananias
- Churches have lost their way since the beginning
 - Ephesus
 - Corinth
 - The Crusades
 - Confusing politics and comfort for the gospel

Matthew 6:16-19

¹⁶ Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” ¹⁷ And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. ¹⁸ And I tell you, you are Peter, and **on this rock I will build my church**, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. ¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

Matthew 6:21-23

²¹ From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. ²² And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, “Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you.” ²³ But he turned and said to Peter, **“Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me.** For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.”

The Church is made up of people who are not divine.

- The founders were flawed
 - Peter
 - Paul + Ananias
- Churches have lost their way since the beginning
 - Ephesus
 - Corinth
 - The Crusades
 - Confusing politics and comfort for the gospel

**If this is God's "Plan A" for his glory,
how does an imperfect Church honor him?**

**The Church glorifies God when we
understand the gift we have received.**

The Church glorifies God when we understand the gift we have received.

- We overcome our shortcomings when we see ourselves in light of Jesus
 - We never lose the urgency of sharing the truth
 - We capture attention by experiencing joy through trust
 - We reflect the gift of receiving grace by giving grace

Ephesians 3:14-21

¹⁴ For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, ¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, ¹⁶ that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸ may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, ¹⁹ and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Ephesians 3:14-21

²⁰ Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, ²¹ to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.