



November 14, 2011

Dear Members and Friends of Wildwood,

I would like to share some encouraging news. Last Thursday (Nov. 1), the elders of Wildwood authorized the building team to implement our commitment to “Connect and Serve” our community by the development of our north side property. This means we will be breaking ground on stage one in March/April 2012. Our future recreation fields, community center building and ultimately new church home are simply resources to both enable us to Connect and Serve upward in worship, inward toward one another but more profoundly outward toward our “Jerusalem”, the thousands of households in our immediate corporate vicinity.

Numerous and lengthy delays have characterized this effort over the years which can be attributed to an uncertain economy, permitting delays and a review process to determine what our initial community center building should look like. In addition we were sharpening the focus of our vision, which is encapsulated in the phrase “Connect and Serve”. But since July, we continue to review our financial status and trends. We have also updated our relocation plans and projected costs and are now in a position to begin a very conservative five-stage process which is wise and fiscally prudent. The Wildwood finance team has reviewed the finances and concurs that the plan is sound. A summary of our plan can be found in the attachment to this letter.

Allow me to remind you of the Biblical basis for such a major undertaking. For many of you this discussion is brand new. Our vision centers around 2 scriptural compulsions.

- **Servanthood:** The entire ministry of Jesus was grounded in His willingness to give up His rights and preferences in order to meet our most practical and spiritual needs. Jesus said “I have not come to be served, but to serve and to give my life a ransom for many.” (Mark 10:45) The Apostle Paul also gave up his rights and preferences (Read I Corinthians 9). He said, “I have made myself a servant to all, that I may win more of them.” (I Corinthians 9:19)

The call to serve certainly rests on each and every Christian to be salt and light in our unique spheres of influence; our family, neighbors, work place and in our individual activities. But we also have a responsibility to our “corporate Jerusalem”, the area proximate to our place of worship. How much more powerful when an entire congregation commits itself to the life of Jesus through an act of corporate servanthood! This is exactly what is envisioned as we together, as the family of Wildwood Church, learn over the years to display a sacrificial heart through the vast array of uses possible

on our 60 acres. The creative energy and spiritual passions of our membership are limitless. This is our opportunity to “corporately care”.

- **Meeting people where they are:** Jesus came to us; He entered our world. He came to us in order to take us to a better place. The apostle Paul demonstrated this same heart when he wrote “to the Jews I became a Jew, in order to win Jews. ...to those under the law, I became as one under the law. To those outside the law as one outside the law. To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that by all means I might save some.” (1 Corinthians 9:20-22)

Both Jesus and Paul understood the people they were seeking to reach. Understanding the people and the nature of our community is called “contextualization”. This means a ministry approach is tailored to the realities and lifestyle of the people we encounter every day. While we do not target certain segments as more desirable we must recognize that our community is full of families with children (62.1%) including many single parents homes (13.3%). We also have a considerable number of underprivileged households in our ministry area.

All of this cries out for family ministry by offering the range of opportunities that all types of families require in this stage of life.

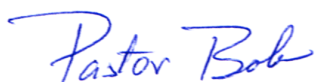
Bill Hybels made an interesting statement, “even pagan parents love their children.” We find that long after parents have given up on their “version” of faith or Christianity, they may not wish the same on their children. We want to be ready to extend the love of Jesus Christ and the gospel of hope through engaging these families in their area of need! The people in our neighborhoods do not understand the gospel.

Relocating to another venue does not make us passionate about our community any more than a plane ride overseas turns us into a missionary. Connecting and Serving is hard work. We must learn to transition from self to servanthood. This reinvigorated direction will call forth from every member of our church a renewed willingness to be what Jesus said we are, salt and light. This venture is not about buildings but about ministry, not bricks and mortar but people. The land is only a tool to be used to fulfill a mandate to go into all of the world, “beginning in Jerusalem”. (Acts 1:8)

The Town Hall meeting to explain the vision in further detail is set for Sunday, January 8th after the conclusion of the second worship service; childcare will be provided up to 5th grade.

I am thankful, blessed and energized as I continue my call to be your pastor, for 20 years and counting, by God’s amazing grace.

Your servant in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Pastor Bob". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Enclosure