

# Looking Ahead

06.06.10

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Back in the Fall of 2008 Faith Covenant Church engaged in a rigorous self-evaluation tool called, Veritas. The goal of Veritas is to identify where a church is in matters of missional life and health.

The result of the evaluation revealed that Faith Covenant was not a healthy missional church. Among the many elements in the definition, a Healthy Missional church witnesses dynamic spiritual transformation and growth often. We were able to be honest with ourselves to say that we are not a healthy missional church.

The next category in the evaluation matrix is a Stable Church. A Stable Church puts most of its energy into maintaining a stable organization and unfortunately does not witness spiritual transformation in people very often. In many ways we are a stable church.

A church however, in a critical moment must make a choice because momentum is going the wrong way and there is not much time. We evaluated Faith Covenant as somewhere between being a stable church and a church in a critical moment. The choice is to make substantial changes in the clarity our vision and function of how we do church or else the momentum will push the church toward being at Risk. Once a church is "at risk," death is almost certain.

With this sober evaluation, Faith Covenant Church formed a Veritas Committee which devoted themselves to prayer and exploration of what to do next. Last fall, Faith Covenant again came together with what we called, The Advance. The objective of the Advance was to set a course for us to become a healthy missional church. An Advance Steering Committee has been working since then to develop a plan to change the momentum of Faith Covenant from being a stable to critical moment church to being healthy and missional church.

As a result of much prayer, and planning and the hard work of Veritas and its committee, the Advance and its committee along with the courageous leadership of the church council, we believe God is leading us to initiate a dramatic and dynamic plan this fall. I want to tell you about it. So buckle your seat belts. We're in for a great ride!

• **Faith Groups** - We are going to engage in an all-church focus on participation in a small group. We are calling the small groups, Faith Groups. Whether you have been a member of Faith Covenant for a long time or this is your first visit, we want to invite you into a life transforming opportunity. We believe that Faith Groups is the most effective vehicle for in-depth spiritual formation, Bible study, christian care and ministry connection. Our goal is for every adult to be connected with a Faith Group.

## Looking Forward 6.6.10

- To get people to participate, we recognize that we cannot just add more obligations to your busy lives. Therefore, we are going to simplify how we do church.
- We will intentionally do less meetings and less activities in order to do more effective discipleship, authentic worship with deeper relationships.
- So, the Fall Schedule is going to look very different.
  - Faith Groups of 8-12 people will be formed to meet weekly at various times during the week. Our curriculum will be “The Truth Project.” You will learn more about the Truth Project in coming weeks.
  - There will be one Sunday worship time, 10:00 am with two simultaneous services.
    - Worship Encounter will gather here in the Sanctuary for worship. And then we are adding a new expression called,
    - Worship Interactive upstairs in the Loft where the Youth meet. We will tell you more about worship in future weeks.
    - We also plan to offer a Worship Interactive service on Saturday evenings.
  - Sunday Picnic - Following our Sunday worship services there we be a gathering every week for the whole congregation to eat and fellowship.
  - A big change for the Fall is that there will not be Sunday School.
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  - One of the first questions people will have is, “What about the children and youth?” We hold the Christian education of our children in highest regard and will not leave them behind. There are exciting plans in the works to continue quality spiritual formation opportunities for our kids. Again, you’ll hear about this part of the plan along the way.
  - Throughout the fall there will be regular forums to evaluate our progress and make necessary strategy adjustments.
- This morning I want to ask you to take 3 actions.
  1. Commit Fall Schedule to rigorous prayer.
  2. Don’t be afraid to ask questions. We have created an online questions and answers forum to help. Go to the church website and on the front page you will find a button that will send you to a questions and answers forum. The forum will be online this week.
  3. Fill out the short online Faith Group survey. This is very important.
    - The web address for the survey is printed on the back of your bulletin for those of you who want to do the survey at home.
    - If you would like to do the survey here, there are nice people with computers located in the entry way to help you. The survey only takes a minute.
- God is calling us to be a healthy missional church. I know that looking ahead the fall schedule may seem a bit overwhelming because it is very different from what we are used to. These are exciting times for us and we want you to fully engage with us in the journey. We believe it will be a blessing to you and transformative to Faith Covenant Church.