

COUNCIL OF ELDERS REPORT

February 2022

As usual, our meeting began with prayer - for our church, for our leaders, and for our country. With so much controversy and unrest, it is good to know that we serve a God who cares and who can be trusted because He is faithful.

Our usual reporting time led to a number of discussions around the various committees of our Council:

- Stewardship is working with a \$9.6 million budget for the coming fiscal year, which is the same as the current year. We are still anticipating a shortfall from our target income budget for this year.
- We are financially supporting two church plants which are currently getting underway - North Peace in Dawson Creek, which you heard about a few weeks ago, and Central Chilliwack's replanting of Harrison Gospel Chapel. You'll be hearing more about that this weekend, and how you can support them.
- The Governance Committee has been updating our Operating Guidelines for greater clarity and accuracy, so we can have greater consistency in our practices.
- In a few months Tri-City will become an independent church within our conference. We are discussing how we can provide the best support for their plans, while creating a roadmap for future replants that would hopefully leave the nest at some point.
- With the recent flood emergency in our region, the City of Abbotsford has realized just how willing the faith community is to serve. We are beginning discussions with them about our possible involvement in emergency and disaster relief. We don't know what this could look like in coming months, but we do want to be available to touch the lives of our area when people are most in need.
- East Abbotsford is up and running again - thank you Lord! Being in new spaces and using new equipment has brought some challenges, but nothing that can't be resolved. More volunteers are needed as they get back up to full speed, especially around children's ministry.
- Our pastoral staff and their teams need your continued prayers, as these last two years have truly stretched them to their limits.
- The Missions Commission continues to discern the most effective ways that we can

develop leadership, especially in vulnerable countries. One such effort is in Uganda for the training of women in leadership, where the majority of leaders are men.

The elders discussed Northview's ongoing response to Covid. Our approach as a church has consistently been to respect those in authority, and follow their lead on what is required.

Several months ago, one of our elders reminded us we ought to "stay in our lane." We are here to proclaim the gospel, lead people to follow Christ, grow to be Christ-like. There are many social issues which could so easily distract from that central mission - to make disciples. Many could come up with arguments for why we should attach ourselves to a particular cause, such as abortion, euthanasia, first-nation residential schools, LGBTQ issues, Black Lives Matter, or the many sides of the Covid debate and the Emergencies Act. We, as a Council of Elders, have determined that to allow that to happen would take us away from our purpose as a church - to make disciples.

Our pastors and leaders deal with people from the full gamut of thinking in so many areas, but we are called to love, to pray, to encourage, and to serve. If leaders spend their time and energy trying to convince people that their way is the best way, they could be kept from what the Lord has called us to do.

Our lead pastor made an interesting comment that came from a conversation he recently had with a pastor in Vancouver who said that he's getting complaints all the time about what their church is doing or not doing when it comes to the issue of the day, but over the last couple of years they have had no one come to Christ, and not a single person has complained about that. Their church would usually welcome 4 to 7 people into the Kingdom each year, but that stream has completely dried up and no one in the congregation seems to have noticed.

Let's remember why we are here. To make disciples - as we teach, as we baptize, as we go through our world - and to love God, one another, and our neighbours, as we love ourselves.

So let's be patient. Let's be kind. Let's be humble. Let's be loving.
May the Lord bless you, and His church.

Phil Routly