

# Ministry Plan

## 2010 - 2011

### Introduction:

As this year's planning season approached we had an early sense that it would be good to have broader congregational involvement. A congregational planning day was held on April 24th where we invited people to discuss 4 key areas of congregational life: Spiritual Assessment; Integration and Discipleship; Our Missional Emphasis and Our Sunday Gatherings. Approximately 70 people attended and we had excellent discussions. In early May, Council went on an overnight retreat and continued to discuss these 4 areas along with several other important topics.

As part of this introduction we give a brief summary statement of the input received at the Planning Day. We appreciated everyone's input and pursued it in more detail at the Council retreat. Having said that, this Ministry Plan Document lays out what we see as the priorities as we look forward to the coming year. Not everything that was discussed or suggested at the Planning Day is included but many have been included.

**Spiritual Assessment:** The discussion groups on this topic tended to focus more on personal spiritual development than on any one key concern for the congregation as a whole. It was clear from the discussion that spiritual development is very important to people and that people deeply desire to grow. People recognized that within the congregation people are at very different places of spiritual maturity and that the circumstances and challenges of their lives have a significant impact on their spiritual journey.

**Discipleship/Integration:** This area overlapped significantly with the topic of spiritual assessment but entered into the practical/systemic/and programatic ways that we seek to integrate and disciple people. While there is an appreciation for the present things we are doing there were many good suggestions and enlightening input regarding improvement in both areas. More specifics are laid out in this document.

**Sunday Morning Gathering:** While there was great appreciation for our Sunday morning gatherings and some of the new things like 'Under Your Roof' and our Intergeneration services, there was no consensus on major changes going forward although there were many great ideas shared. Hearing from one another on this topic is helpful in itself in recognizing our diversity.

**Missional Emphasis:** People were very supportive of the new developments with Gerry and Barb preparing to go to Guatemala and time was spent discussing how best to raise support for them and implications to our general budget. Also the group spent time considering the need to have people share stories of God's work through them in their neighbourhood (and other places) to encourage and motivate one another. Discerning next steps as a missional people requires ongoing prayer and engagement.

While there are differences of perspective on many of the areas of the life of our church, at the same time we are blessed to experience a high degree of unity. This is a sign of God's presence and a witness to the level of spiritual maturity that we have. This has not been an easy year of change and while we are still in transition with staff we need to give thanks for the unity we experience and continue to pursue it together. One of the ways that we have sought to preserve this unity is by inviting people to prayerfully consider how they will respond to the things we believe God is inviting us into, rather than pressuring in any way. Freely we have received. Freely give.

As you read this Ministry Plan we invite you to continue to ask the question, am I doing what God would want me to do as part of this community of faith and the mission that we participate in together.

## **New Staff Orientation**

In the past year the Search Committee has worked hard on our behalf to discern together God's person for our Associate Pastor position. We anticipate at this juncture that this position will be settled and employed by the end of the summer. The orientation and integration of a new team member (and family) into the life and ministry of our congregation will be a very significant priority.

## **Children's Ministry Leadership**

Early this Spring, Monica Stocks, who has given faithful leadership as the Deacon of Christian Education, gave notice that she was not going to let her name stand for reappointment this year. The nominating committee is pleased that Deb Madill has agreed to let her name stand for nomination to this position. Monica gave overall leadership to Sunday morning with particular leadership to the Sunday School program at the 9:00 hour. With recent work changes, Annette Eggengoor has communicated that she will not be able to continue as the Discovery Land coordinator. These are very significant leadership transitions. We are seeking to discern whether this may require an adjustment to our fall planning or whether God will raise up new leadership.

## **Discipleship**

The Congregational Planning Day revisited the "Discipleship Plan" which was drafted last year. Initially it was discovered that many people were unaware of this document and its contents but it was positively received and seen as very helpful and provided the basis for excellent conversation at the Planning Day. It is now hoped that we can further develop this plan into a more specific yearly calendar (and possibly multi-year) to enable people to make informed decisions as to what they will participate in on their "journey to maturity". Recognizing that people are at different places in their spiritual development and what is needed to move forward will be very helpful. We are planning for this to be our focus in the early part of the fall.

In the Discipleship Plan the area where we sense there is significant, if not the greatest challenge, is the movement from Phase 3 (Close to Christ) to Phase 4 (Christ Centred). While we recognize that this is a life long endeavour, the importance of assisting people in this movement to Phase 4 and what that signifies is critical to health, both personally and corporately. We are exploring ways in which we can be more intentional in engaging people in this pursuit.

One of the suggestions that came out of the Planning Day was that we have a full congregational emphasis/study, like we did with the Purpose Driven Life course. We are exploring options and considering when the best time in the Church year (fall/ January etc.) might be.

A request that surfaced on the planning day was for a Sunday morning adult study that could be offered after the 1st service. While there is an openness to this concept, with the requirement that it function more like a small group (not Sunday School), it will require God to raise up a leader(s) for this initiative.

## **Deepening Partnership with Mano Con Mano**

In the unfolding of the events of our third Guatemala mission trip, we have been exposed to a sense of God's direction in the region. With the introduction of Los Olivos Church onto the scene along with their vision for the region, we are struck by the hand of God at work. We are also aware of the invitation to play a part in the fulfilment of Gods plans. The call of God on Barb and Gerry to commit to a long term work with Mano Con Mano is yet another part of God at work. As their "sending church", we are seeking to discern together what support should look like. Needless to say this is a role we need to grow into and adjustments will be required. With the timing of our 3rd mission trip and in our journey with Gerry and Barb we have had greater engagement with the leadership of Mano Con Mano and are wanting to be wise and discerning in that engagement. Please pray for all aspects of this deepening partnership.

We have invited the congregation to make a financial pledge to supporting Gerry and Barb and are well on the way towards the goal. We are trusting this will not impact our General Budget givings negatively. As a financial short term consideration, we have made cuts in other areas of missional support (i.e. Canadian Baptist Ministries, Focus on the Family, Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, Mission trip base funding) to allow for greater funds to be directed to Mano Con Mano.

At the planning day there was some discussion around mission trip fundraisers. The hope would be that fundraisers for mission trips will be spread over the year and that hopefully teams can start early so that it is not quite as intense as it was this past year. This coming year a youth team will be heading to the Dominican Republic.

## **Missional Emphasis**

Along with our growing partnership with Mano Con Mano is our own engagement with the Brampton community. This has taken place through M.A.D. Days, the ESL ministry with Basic Computer Classes and Ted's coaching to make connections with our neighbours. There has also been ongoing involvement with Project 417, Regeneration and Woodhall. Through Ted's engagement with us we have now had two years of focus on the biblical mandate to reach out, in intentional ways, to those in our sphere of influence. Through the building of relationships, we are to point our friends and loved ones to the Kingdom. Although we understand our Lord's directive here, we have found it a challenging to make substantial inroads and to make it a priority in the midst of our busy lives. The significant transitions in our congregational life have required extra time as well and has influenced the level of engagement.

We have been blessed and challenged by Ted (and Jen's) ministry in our midst as they have become a part of our congregational life. Ted's journey in his own community continues to develop and his example and initiatives are a powerful witness to us. Our funding from CBOQ for Ted will continue for another year and then we will assess next steps. We no longer see Ted as simply a consultant but more like a personal coach who operates on the basis of the relationships that are developed. Ted and Jen continue to look for ways to encourage, and stimulate movement outwards into our relational networks (home, work and play). Ted will also be open to consulting with other churches in our denomination this coming year as part of our agreement with the CBOQ.

## **CCN Simulcast ministry**

We have received positive feedback for the conferences we hosted last year through CCN. Since we have membership already for another year that came as a bonus for signing up for one of the conferences this past year, this coming year we can pick and choose as opportunities come and as we have leadership. (e.g. small groups conference) The anticipation is that each conference will be self-supporting. We are not planning on taking on a major conference like the parenting or marriage workshop of last year. Current plans include the GroupLife Conference Oct. 23; "Love & War" with John & Stasi Eldredge Nov. 6; and "Unlocked" for women's ministry, date TBA. Our membership also provides access to other great resources which people are welcome to pursue through their website and an access code. For more information contact Sue Gumbley or Lois Hardy.

## **R4R Changes**

Ride for Refugees is now Ride for Refuge which has broadened the kinds of ministries for which monies can be raised. Also, a greater percentage of money raised (now 60%) will go to the ministry we are focused on. We sense an even deeper commitment to provide financial resources to Mano Con Mano for their ongoing work in Yalu. As a result, we will be looking to maximize this event as it extends our reach to access financial resources other than our own. We are also investigating the youth being able to support the work to which they serve on their mission trip. Up to now, that mission has been in the Dominican.

## **Faith at Home/ Under Your Roof/ Family ministry.**

We received positive input regarding our Family ministry developments. Our next Associate Pastor will give leadership in this area along with our lay leaders. We are very grateful for the leadership of our lay leaders in the interim and look forward to this emphasis continuing to develop in the months ahead. Annette Eggengoor has agreed to continue to give leadership to this ministry in the coming year.

## **Integration.**

We received some very helpful insights and suggestions at the Congregational Planning Day regarding how we can more effectively connect with people new to our congregation. The implementation of these ideas will require a team and a key leader to move them forward. While the ideas suggested are not difficult it requires some time and energy. If this is an area that you feel passionate about, please considering stepping up. Some good ideas were shared regarding the website as a very important tool. We hope to give this some review and development in the year ahead.

## **Sunday Morning Gathering**

At our congregational planning day we had great conversations around our Sunday morning gatherings. The focus of our discussion centred on our Sunday morning services. As we heard from each person we heard that some would prefer longer singing times and some shorter. Some would like longer sharing times and others shorter. Some don't care how long the sermon is and others really do. And so on. While there was no clear consensus on some of these particularities it was important to hear the united value of our corporate worship and the willingness to enter into worship with open and seeking hearts even when not everything is done the way one might exactly prefer. There were a number of good suggestions that were made that will be taken into account by those who plan and give leadership to our services.

One of the key discussion points was whether our 2 services Sunday morning should have different focuses/aims. For example: one service being more for seekers, or new to the faith and the other for further along the spiritual development journey. While the group that were a part of these discussions were open to consider this there was no strong consensus. Much more planning and considering the pro's and con's as well as the specifics required to make this happen would need to be done. This is not seen as a high priority for at least the first half of the coming year. We may experiment with some things through this coming year and gauge response and effectiveness.

## **Basement Development**

We could begin to develop the basement for additional space for both congregational and rental usage. We have people in the congregation capable of doing the work with the cost being materials. We could begin with one room. If we simply did outside walls and floors it would remain flexible for any future specific uses. The suggestion is to raise funds for this with a fundraiser. We are experiencing mixed feelings as to the timing of this initiative. This is largely due to not having an urgent need that is requiring this work to be done. There is a view that we should hold off until a specific need for the space becomes apparent. Details around the finishing can then take into account any special considerations for that purpose.

## **Finances**

Significant discussion took place in our planning season in an attempt to reduce the budget, given the significant gap between budget and income. While we have operated within the income that we have received it has meant not spending in areas budgeted. We are thankful for each budget holders careful expenditures. In some ways this gap between actuals and budget is okay and we seek to build into the budget some level of contingency/flexibility so that we do not have to go back to the congregation for revised budgets. Yet we don't want this distance to be too great. It was a very challenging process for the Finance Committee and Council as we grappled with priorities. While we were not able to completely close the gap between actuals and budget there are substantial changes. Our budget remains a faith stretch budget given the ongoing pledge campaign and the new support to Mano Con Mano. May we know God's enabling blessing and faithful stewardship.

## **YFC Brampton Worker Support**

One of the by-products of the Brampton Ride for Refuge is that it required Brampton Churches to work together. The early relationships that have developed have led some of us to wonder about whether this is a relational foundation for something greater that God is beginning to do in Brampton. This past year, we were approached by a core group of Brampton church leaders who are working to bring a Youth For Christ (YFC) worker to Brampton. The initial ask of us was to be counted among the first five Brampton churches, to be extended to 10 - 12 churches, to give prayer and consideration to this direction. We have also been asked to contribute \$3,200 for three years. We are in early stages but are seeking to discern whether this is evidence of God's hand at work.

## **Conclusion**

The year ahead is going to be one of significant transition. We need to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus and be diligent at healthy communication with one another as we navigate these various changes. In the midst of change it is always good to remember that we serve One who is eternally faithful and unchanging in His essence. Ephesians 5:25 tells us "...Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her." It is an amazing thing to consider the love of Christ for us His bride. May we respond to that love with a desire to passionately become all that Christ envisioned us to be.