

2010 ANNUAL MEETING SUMMARY

If you weren't able to make it for our 2010 Annual Meeting on Sunday February 21, 2010 we hope this summary will do a decent job of brining you mostly up to speed. In our annual meeting we talked about some ways we are going to focus our mission for the upcoming year. If you are interested in reading more about what our overall goals are as a community, you can read a detailed description that I have recently put up on our website (<http://church.thewellpa.com/what-are-we-doing/>).

But basically put, we're a community that is shaping and sending each other into the world to be witnesses to Jesus Christ.

In our meeting on Sunday, we reviewed our goals from 2009 and then took some time to talk about some key goals we'll be focusing on for 2010.

Review of Goals from 2009:

#1 The Building

We set out with a goal last year to address the use of our space. Our intention since the day we moved in has been to have it be a tool to serve and bless others. As we began looking at this last year, we had two main goals: 1) To use our space to bless others 2) rent our space to help financially support our mission. Over the years we have done this well. But, we've struggled with consistency. So, last year we spent a good amount of time behind the scenes looking at different approaches to how we could do this with more focus. The result of this was that this year we decided to go forward with hiring someone to oversee the use of our space. You should have seen the advertisements for this position on the website, in the e-mail, announcements from the front and in the bulletin the last two months. The person we have decided is best fit for this position is Dan Dauenbaugh (you might know him as the non-bald sound guy). We are excited about having Dan fill this role! If you have questions about the role that Dan will fulfill, please let us know.

#2 Bristol

Last year we started out the year praying for God's leading in Bristol. A small group met in Bristol this summer at the home of Brian and Dorie Morgan and

God soon formed in this group a vision and a calling for starting a church there. This group began meeting for worship in the fall of last year and it's been wonderful to be able to watch them learn and grow as a community, even in such a short time. They formed officially as Redemption Church of Bristol and are finalizing their articles of incorporation right now. They have been working hard to get integrated into the life of Bristol and they have done a great job caring for the homeless community there. In fact, there are a number of homeless folks who worship with Redemption Church every Sunday night. This year we will be supporting this community financially and we will have the opportunity to parter with them on the annual local missions trip and other projects that arise.

#2 Address our discipleship process

We spent a lot of time praying through and taking a good look at our environment of discipleship and we're excited where God is leading. There are generally four ways we are formed together into the image of Christ:

- **Personal Formation** - this would include personal disciplines like prayer, silence, bible study, fasting, personal retreats, etc.
- **Liturgical Formation** - our corporate worship gatherings are meant to shape us together as a community for the sake of our mission together.
- **Relational Formation** - relationships are a very vital component of our formation, especially as we meet intentionally to speak the gospel into one another lives
- **Educational Formation** - we believe that knowledge and truth is a vital part of our formation as it gives grounding to our faith.

We have room to grow in all of these areas but as we looked at our life together as a community it was clear that we have the most work to do in the area of educational formation. We have tried many different approaches to this with limited success and this year we want to concentrate growing in this area. This year we want to address this concern (you will read more about this below).

We also talked about our upcoming goals for 2011.

#1 Continued to focus on discipleship.

We will be doing this in three specific ways:

- **We will be addressing our need for more education opportunities.** We'll have more information about how this approach might look on Sunday morning. But, this means the possibility of moving our worship gathering time to 10:00am - 11:30 am and therefore having the option to have classes from 11:45am - 12:30pm. There are a lot of details to work out in this proposal (child-care, length of service, lunch, class size, etc.) but we sense a great need for all of us to have opportunities for deeper Christian Education. This schedule would start in April if we move forward with it. Between now and then we will look at how the details would work out and have some opportunities to hear your feedback.
- **We will be fostering a conversation about human sexuality this summer.** Simply put, this is a topic that is a hot button in our culture and we want to talk about it. We are still working out the format on how we will do this (Sunday mornings, Community Midrash, special classes, etc).
- **We will have some intentional ways for us to continue to foster and increase our culture of generosity at The Well.** We'll do this by providing practical support for each other in helping us address our personal/family financial situations, mainly debt. One of the ways we will do this, along with a few others, is by having a monthly budgeting support group for those who are looking for some hope and some support in getting their finances in order. This group will be starting in late March. We will also be offering an introduction to budgeting class this year as well.

#2 - Organizational Stability

We are working on taking this year to reorganize our staff and pastors in light of the Bristol Church plant. With Gary now

moving to Bristol, we need to address the make up of our pastors and staff. While Gary is not necessarily replaceable, we are working on how to fill in the gaps that his transition leaves. Starting in May, Todd will be moving 35 hours a week (he is currently paid for 25 hours a week). He will still be working another job as a web designer but this change will allow him to focus more on leadership and pastoral responsibilities with the church in way that is more sustainable for The Well and for his family. As you may have seen will also be hiring a part-time Administrative Coordinator in early summer to manage all the behind the scenes things that the church needs done.

#3 - Community Calling and Mission.

One of the marks of The Well is a desire to continually evaluate our calling and mission in Bucks County. We have identified locality as one of our key values. That is, we see that a big part of our calling is to care for and be present in the area that we live. Our location does not lend itself to a strong, specific local calling.

Many churches are started in areas where there is a strong sense of "place" such as Redemption Church in Bristol or our friends the Renew Community in Lansdale. For these churches their calling is clear: the specific town they are in. Redemption's mission is Bristol. Renew's mission is Lansdale.

For The Well, it's not that simple. There is no town square in Feasterville. I guess you could say that Feasterville's town center is the corner of Street Road and Bustleton Pike but all we have there is a Walgreens, a Ford Dealership and the Suburban Diner. That's not much of a town square if you as me! Not only does Feasterville and Lower Southampton Township not have much of an identity, but another issue is that most of us come from anywhere but Feasterville. We come from places like Hatboro to Bensalem, from Newtown and Doylestown and Langhorne and Levittown.

Since are in a place like sprawling suburbia we have to think differently about what it means to have a public witness as a community. For the last couple years we have done wonderful work in get-

ting know the needs and those serving in Lower Bucks County. *This year, we will be focusing on getting to know the passions, gifting, callings and experiences that are in our congregation as we seek to find our missional identity in Lower Bucks County.*

We will generally approach this in two ways (among others):

- A series of Midrash / Community conversations around what our stories are, what our passions are and where the fringes (i.e. the wrong side of the tracks) of our community are. These will begin this summer and head into the fall.
- We will have an intern from Princeton Theological Seminary this summer who will be working with a team of people from The Well to spend some time listening to and compiling the stories and passions of our congregation. We believe that the future of The Well lies in who we are, the passions we have and the gifts we bring. As we move forward in this new phase, it will be exciting to see how God is leading and guiding us.

Other Stuff, Budgets and Votes:

During our meeting Phil Wood did an excellent job of detailing how and why we have the budget that we have. We sent this budget out last week and if you would like another copy please let us know. Per our constitution, we will have a vote of affirmation in two weeks after this budget was presented. Also, our constitution calls that the congregation affirm our decision to add Dan Dauenbaugh as the Building Coordinator. *Therefore, in two weeks (March 7th) we will have a short meeting after church to have a vote of affirmation on these two topics.*

Finally...

In all of this, our prayer is that when 2011 comes around, we will be able to say that we have grown well in the area of Biblical education, organizational stability and especially in our understanding of the specifics of what it means to be a distinctly Christian community in the strange world of Suburban Philadel-

phia. But mostly, we pray that we would continue to be a community for the sake of others.

One final note, if you have any questions about decisions that are being made, have been made or might be made, please come talk to someone on the Ministry Leadership Team. We know that it is practically impossible for us to give voice to every specific detail of every decision that happens in our community. But, at the same time, we want to be an open book. If you have questions, comments or concerns that you are carrying, let's talk!

Looking forward to a wonderful year on mission together!



Todd Hiestand