



NOTES FROM PASTOR JIM, YOUR TRANSITION PASTOR – 6/17/18

In my last column today, I will share part of my Pastor's Report I gave to the Council this past Monday evening. Vicki and I leave for home (Boise, Idaho) tomorrow morning. Pastor Beth Marie Halvorsen will lead worship here at HOP next Sunday, June 24th. She has been the Pastoral Consultant working with us during this time of transition. Your new pastor, Eric Youngdahl, arrives on July 1.

- **It has been an honor and a privilege** to serve you as pastor these last 4 months. You have had some unexpected difficult issues/concerns to deal with, and I think you have done so, by and large, very well. You have also been a gracious, hospitable people of God—again--as we came among you for a second time this past February. You generously welcomed Vicki and me back into your lives and life together in so many ways. That spirit of hospitality will serve you well as you engage with your new pastor to continue being about God's mission in the world. We will leave you on the 18th with many fond memories and good feelings about our work together these last 4 months.
- As I leave you, I would like to give you **some feedback on your present ministry**—offering you some observations from a set of eyes as an outsider who has been with you on two occasions—about 9 months the first time around and 4 months this time. The positives in this ministry far outweigh the negatives, believe me. In fact, I do not want you to hear what I will be saying as negatives at all. Please think of them more as challenges—some of which you may be immediately open to and others you may initially resist. I will share these challenges in the context of a congregation which I believe wants to grow—in numbers and in its outreach to the surrounding neighborhoods. I have heard person after person among you share that desire for House of Prayer. I share that desire and hope for you. But growth always involves change and change often includes dealing with loss. That is not always a comfortable transition to participate in, but I believe HOP as presently constituted has all the raw ingredients it needs to engage in this transition. You are a strong, stable congregation—highly educated, not only in terms of IQ but EI (Emotional Intelligence) as well. The latter (EI) is greatly undervalued but crucially important in a diverse and fast changing culture if a congregation really wants to grow its ministry. You have a genuine sense of hospitality about you that makes not only pastors feel welcome but other new folks who come into your midst as well. The raw ingredients are present.
- Having said this, **here are some facets of your ministry I believe (in no special order) you may want to pay attention to as you seek to grow** both in terms of numbers and in outreach to the community. I will share these only in outline form. You may check in with Pastor Eric if you want more detail on any of these items (I will share that detail with him.)

1. The wearing of name tags/friendship badges at Sunday worship.
 2. Tracking Sunday worship attendance so follow-up can happen with those who begin drifting away.
 3. Intentional follow-up by someone(s) other than the pastor with those who miss worship 3 Sundays in a row.
 4. A more intentional integrating of new people into the life of the congregation.
 5. A much more visible, inviting sign out front (electronic)—your neighboring churches have them.
 6. An intentional once a year challenging approach to the congregation around stewardship of financial resources and ongoing financial stewardship education.
 7. A reconsideration of the shrinking of the summer worship schedule.
 8. A more intentional interaction with the very unique and diverse preschool this congregation hosts.
 9. Keeping the Council small (as is presently) but expanding the number of ministry teams so that more folks can become involved.
- **I send out a personal group email to “Family and Friends” about once every 4-6 weeks** to keep folks up to date on what is happening in the Grunow household. It is my version of a personal blog. I am willing to put anyone on it who wants to be on it but you will have to specifically ask. No one is automatically added to the mailing list. Email (jamesggrunow@gmail.com) text, or call me (208-571-6309) if you want to be included in this mailing. I will invite you in return to share news about what is happening in your household.