

State of the Church

I. Preparing & Prepared to Possess (Deuteronomy 29-31)

- A. A renewal of a covenant between God and his people (29:14-15)
- B. God wants to prosper his people; People are to love God (30:6-10)
- C. Choose: Life & Prosperity or Death & Destruction... Choose Life! (30:11-20)
- D. Continuation of leadership: Moses to Joshua (“strong & courageous”; 31:1-8)
- E. Regularly review (“seven years”; “listen and learn”; 31:9-13)
- F. “You will bring... into the land I promised; I... will be with you” (31:23)

II. Review of Grand Central’s Past

- A. Roots in the American Restoration Movement
 - 1. Deep roots in this area of the country
 - 2. Unity of all who place their faith in Jesus Christ
 - 3. Evangelistic zeal
 - 4. Forefather’s: Dedicated to God’s word over man’s traditions
- B. Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 1:8)
 - 1. Helping People Find Jesus
 - 2. Helping Believers Become Disciples
 - 3. Legacy demands loyalty to Scripture and devotion to relevant proclamation
- C. Compels us to:
 - 1. Celebrate salvation found only in Jesus Christ (John 14:6)
 - 2. Confront “false doctrine” among believers (1 Timothy 1:3; 2 Timothy 2:23-26; 2 Peter 2:1; 1 John 4:1)
 - 3. Expose “evil” in the world (John 3:16-21; Romans 12:9, 17-21; Ephesians 4:8-16; James 1:13-15, 19-22)

III. 2008: A Challenging Year

- A. Recognize our dependence on God; especially, at this time, in making plans (Lessons from Proverbs 16 & 19)
 - 1. To man belong the plans of the heart, but from the LORD comes the reply of the tongue (Proverbs 16:1).
 - 2. Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the LORD's purpose that prevails (Proverbs 19:21).
 - 3. In his heart a man plans his course, but the LORD determines his steps (Proverbs 16:19).
 - 4. Commit to the LORD whatever you do, and your plans will succeed (Proverbs 16:3).
- B. Lost around 50 established members (moved to other parts of the country)
- C. With those who died, those who have fallen away, lost close to 100 members
- D. Attendance dropped an average of 15-31 per Sunday
- E. Transitions in Leadership (Elders/Shepherds, Deacons, Staff)

1. Not about “anger” or “protest”
 2. Natural movement
 3. Staff: Adam & Kevin (loved by many; 3 years; 14 years leaves a mark!)
 4. Deuteronomy 29-31, Moses prepared them; Joshua led them to possess
 5. Staff: Ryan & Brian are outstanding
 6. Our Current Shepherds: Exceptional, dedicated, committed men of God
- F. Bible Class Attendance increased dramatically since switched schedule (+ 37 people; added class)
- G. Campus Ministry has struggled
- H. Community Groups continued to grow in number and significance
- I. Missions continue to receive emphasis and interest
- J. Prime-Timers ministry is simply amazing
- K. Sacrifice*Serve*Seek saw more people exploring service
- L. Work Camp provides an avenue for service, unity, and increased visibility
- M. Young Adults now have two community groups and a growing class
- N. Youth now have more involved in classes and activities
- O. Others: DOK, Benevolence, VCNS, Prayer Warriors, etc.
- P. **Finances**
1. Special note; fell short of \$445,299 budget by less than \$7000...
 2. Spending was considerably less than budgeted
 3. Finished in the black
 4. You made a decision: Faith over fear

IV. 2009 & 2010: Years of Challenge

- A. We’ve worked together for just shy of seven years! I’ve shared with our shepherds I’m excited every day about what God is doing here!
1. Helping People Find Jesus
 2. Helping Believers Become Disciples
- B. Working Assumption: World that emphasizes “experiential”—want to know what “you do” more than “what you believe” (we recognize they are intertwined)
1. Have at times approached people with “believe” first then you can “experience”
 2. Need to allow people to “experience” a taste of what it means to be a part of the Christianity community as they are on the path to “belief”
 3. Encourage people to become a part of Community Groups, Bible Classes, Work Camp, trips to Honduras, Salvation Army, Marie’s House to Home; allow them to help in Vacation Bible School, various ministries
 4. Do this in meaningful ways that do not call for compromise of convictions (would not have a non-believer providing spiritual guidance, teaching the Bible, etc.)
 5. Theological basis: Apostles were not “Christians” when they started following Jesus; they were learning what it meant to follow or be in Christ
 6. Israel was prepared before they possessed, so we can prepare people!

C. **Ten Challenges for 2009-2010**

1. **WORSHIP/ASSEMBLIES**

- a. To bring glory to God
- b. Need: Balance; Wild & Loud vs. Boring & Blasé
- c. Specifics: Song slides with notes, drama, video, emphasis on excellence
- d. Some “can’t believe” what is happening (Jerusalem church would have trouble with us)
- e. Specifics: Greeters ministry and training; Enhance Welcome Desk
- f. Measurable Goal:
 - (1) Current January 2009 average: 325
 - (2) Average by end of 2010: 450-550
- g. Challenge: Auditorium is inadequate (two assemblies, plant church)

2. **BIBLE CLASSES**

- a. Church established on truths of God’s word
- b. Need: Build team spirit with shared vision/mission
- c. Specifics: Teacher training; building esprit de corps among teachers; Use fellowship out of class to encourage growth; Emphasis on spiritual growth as the result of growth in knowledge of the truth
- d. Specifics: Add minimum of four adult classes by December 2010
- e. Measurable Goal:
 - (1) Currently January 2009 average: 228
 - (2) Average by end of 2010: 315-385 (70% of AM Attendance)
- f. Challenge: Only two empty classrooms (each max out at 15 people; may need to go to two Bible Class times; off-site classes)

3. **SHEPHERDING**

- a. Men called to be shepherds of God’s flock
- b. Need: Shepherds’ desire to be more effective, available, involved
- c. Specifics: Plans to put together a shepherding plan where every deacon, ministry leader, teacher, member, etc. knows they are welcome to contact a specific shepherd(s)
- d. Specifics: All members informed of shepherds’ schedule, encouraged to schedule times to meet for prayer, counseling, guidance
- e. Specifics: Have regular (quarterly?) meetings with new members and guests during a Sunday luncheon
- f. Measurable Goals:
 - (1) Shepherding Plan put into place and all members informed of structure
 - (2) By December 31, 2009 every member to have received invitation to a visit, shared meal, etc. (meaningful contact) with at least one shepherd
- g. Challenge: Putting together plan; scheduling meetings

4. MISSIONS

- a. The Great Commission, and foreign missions, are not options or enhancements to the work of the church, they are central and essential
- b. Need: To transition from a “supporting” church to a “sending” church
- c. Specifics: Continue to support current mission works
- d. Specifics: Identify Grand Central members, develop heart for missions and encourage training; when trained, send them into the field
- e. Specifics: Raise “our own” missionaries (short-term missions enhance), increase the member participation in prayer, encouragement, and support
- f. Measurable Goals:
 - (1) Have Missions Budget grow by at least 10-20% in 2010 Budget
 - (2) By December 31, 2010 have identified at least one Grand Central member who is pursuing training for missions (to be sent)
- g. Challenge: To provide training for members to understand this vision of missions (need regular emphasis, lessons, Bible Classes)

5. MEMBERSHIP

- a. Every member to realize they are called to ministry (“discipleship”)
- b. Need: Transition from “being served” to “serving” (believers to disciples)
- c. Specifics: Expectation that all members are specifically contacted and encouraged to serve (“Body”)
- d. Measurable Goals:
 - (1) Ministry Fair in April to be more focused
 - (2) By December 31, 2009 at least 70% of members involved in ministry
 - (3) By December 31, 2010 at least 85% of members involved in ministry
- e. Challenge: To provide ministry leaders with appropriate training to support these goals

6. LEADERSHIP

- a. Goals and vision fail without adequately training leadership
- b. Need: Place emphasis on leadership training and development
- c. Specifics: Each Shepherd/Elder, Deacon, Ministry Leader, Community Group Leader, Bible Class Teacher, and Ministry Staff member to have at least one person identified as one they are mentoring for 2009 and 2010.
- d. Specifics: Regular leadership training made available, with expectation that all who lead will participate
- e. Specifics: Have Leadership Training Saturdays at least five times a year (every-other-month); sessions to be two hours and include worship, vision casting, encouragement, specific skills training, and planning by specific ministry groupings (may change from month-to-month)
- f. Measurable Goals:

- (1) Number of individuals in identifiable positions of leadership (official and unofficial) will grow by 40% in 2009 or 2008
- (2) Number of individuals in identifiable positions of leadership (official and unofficial) will grow by 100% in 2010 or 2008
- g. Challenges:
 - (1) To overcome prejudice against the need for leadership training
 - (2) To overcome aversion to asking “too much” (spelled: commitment)
 - (3) To overcome discomfort with women having positions of leadership (inline with scripture)

7. **COMMUNITY GROUPS**

- a. Encourage spiritual growth and connection to the body of Christ
- b. Need: To increase opportunities for believers and non-believers to become involved in meaningful fellowship and the life of the Body
- c. Specifics: Greater emphasis on the “empty chair” (cooperate with other ministries in identifying those who need to be contacted) and groups giving birth to new groups
- d. Specifics: Emphasize possibility of groups with different character (underserved groups, recovery, support, etc.)
- e. Specifics: Continually prepare and train leaders
- f. Measurable Goals:
 - (1) Number of groups as of January 2009: 17
 - (2) Number of groups as of January 2010: 20-22
 - (3) Number of groups as of December 2010: 24-30
- g. Challenges:
 - (1) Training leaders to understand “relational/growth” model rather than “class/superficial relationships” model (more difficult and risky)
 - (2) Tendency of groups to be “inward” rather than “outward” focused

8. **FINANCES**

- a. Stewardship reflects hearts of faith and grace
- b. Need: To encourage growth in faith reflected in giving
- c. Specifics: Members should be challenged to grow in this grace
- d. Specifics: Members should be praised when growth happens
- e. Measurable Goals:
 - (1) 2009 Budget for Grand Central: \$445,299
 - (2) 2009 Actual Giving Goal: \$490,000 (10% over budget)
 - (3) 2010 Budget for Grand Central: \$500,000 (12% + increase on 2009)
 - (4) 2010 Actual Giving Goal: \$575,000 (15% over budget)
- f. Challenge: To place faith in God in the midst of “fearful” times

9. COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH

- a. Letting everyone know what is happening at Grand Central
- b. Need: To continual enhance and expand our communication
- c. Specifics: Explore ways to improve current communication: bulletin, web, announcements, Phone Tree, email, etc.
- d. Specifics: Develop a schedule of events that are “outreach” oriented— develop promotional materials, make use of various media outlets
- e. Specifics: Work on more timely and concentrated follow-up with all contacts made
- f. Specifics: Expand and train the “communications” and “outreach” teams; allow them to help set goals and standards (excellence)
- g. Measurable Goals:
 - (1) Develop materials for use at Welcome Station and for Follow-Up visits
 - (2) Provide more “visitor friendly” signage in and around building
 - (3) Have at least four “outreach” oriented events each year; at least two per year to focus on making contacts for follow-up visits
- h. Challenge: Realizing focus is not on “big numbers” but on making meaningful connections with people to point them to Jesus

10. VARIOUS “DEMOGRAPHIC-SPECIFIC” MINISTRIES

- a. Prime-Timers, Young Adults, Campus Ministry, etc.
- b. Need: To enhance these ministries so they can effectively reach specific target groups of people who need Jesus
- c. Specifics: Teams which focus on providing meaningful opportunities for each of these groups need to be built and empowered to plan and act
- d. Specifics: Emphasis in time and resources needs to be placed proportionately, without ignoring others, where efforts are bringing in greatest response
- e. Measurable Goals:
 - (1) Double number of participants and Community Groups for each demographic group by December 31, 2010
 - (2) Add at least one other “identifiable” demographic group ministry by December 31, 2010
- f. Challenge: Inter-generational and inter-group cooperation and fellowship which builds up the body rather than encouraging the growth of specific “interest groups” which are separated from others