

Vision & Transition: Frequently Asked Questions
October 21, 2018

STAFF ROLES

- 1. Is Gary going to remain “Lead Pastor” and Brian “People Development Pastor,” plus there will be additional pastors for each service gathering?**

Answer: Yes. Gary will continue to give leadership to the overall church vision, Sunday teaching team and greater PCC leadership team. Brian will continue to give leadership to developing the overall PCC disciple pathways with the greater adult ministry team (Lisa Chan - Admin, Peter Perkins - Generations Pastor, Luke Wilkerson - Young Adults Pastor, Sharon Seeberger - Missions). Meanwhile, the gathering pastors, who will report to Carlos DeVitis, will be responsible for developing volunteer teams, assimilating new people, establishing small groups, and supporting care needs within their gathering.

- 2. There has been a lot of staff turnover this year. Was this all known/anticipated at one time, or has this unusually high loss of staff been coincidental?**

Answer: Both. There has been both a convergence of some individual staff who felt called out in this season, along with some that have been let go based on our Vision 2025 needs. Your staff has done their best to prepare staff and congregation in the midst of these transitions, as well as trying honor the individual staff who are in transition.

- 3. Can you please address how pastoral care for women will be handled in the wake of Janet Miclean leaving?**

Answer: Our hope and desire is that the women in our congregation and on staff feel supported and led by women in pastoral leadership roles when needed. In the absence of Janet Miclean and Tabatha Mason, care for women is being handled on a case by case basis. Support is available through other women and men on the staff, women’s ministry leaders, other capable women in the congregation, Stephen Ministers, and/or referrals to professional support. Moving forward, our intent is to hire more women into pastoral roles, including upcoming gathering pastor hires.

- 4. We have blessed and prayed for people going out on mission trips during worship. Can we do the same for staff who are leaving us? This would allow us to express gratitude for their service.**

Answer: We want to be a community that celebrates both when people are called into ministry on PCC’s staff, and celebrates when the Lord calls staff into other seasons and places of ministry when those times come. We also are endeavoring more to honor individual staff requests and desires for how they are honored as they depart. For the most recent 3 staff departures, we have included a time to pray and appreciate each staff person at the worship gatherings at which they’ve been most connected during their time on staff. Also, for each of those staff, cards have been made available on tables at every worship gathering for the congregation to express prayers or words of appreciation. We will continue to provide those spaces to thank and pray for staff in upcoming and future departures as well.

- 5. What will an Executive Pastor do for PCC and why do we need one? Interim suggests this to be a temporary position?**

Answer: PCC has always had a leadership position responsible for providing leadership and maximizing the effectiveness of PCC’s organizational structure and operations as well as helping provide strategic oversight for the overall PCC ministry.

Over the years, the name of this position has changed/evolved (ex. Operations Director, Pastor of Organization Development, Executive Pastor, etc.). We are changing the name back to Executive Pastor to clarify within our community and at large the role of this individual.

God continues to bless the ministry of PCC by dramatically increasing our reach into our local community as well as globally. PCC (Church, Center, PE+, School Age Child Care, Preschool) serves over 9000 people locally, employs over 250 part time and full time staff, and is responsible for maximizing the kingdom impact of the resources God has given us (\$8M budget, 15 acres of land, and 6 houses). Therefore, the need for an Executive Pastor is just as important, if not more than ever before.

We are blessed to have Meritt Sawyer, a PCC member who is an ordained minister, step into the Interim Executive Pastor. In accordance to our Bylaws for interim positions,, Meritt was unanimously approved by the Officers, the Leadership Team, and the Lead Team.

In 2019, we will engage in an earnest search for a permanent Executive Pastor, and we pray that during our May Stakeholder Summit, we would have a candidate to vote on. Pray with us for this!

VISION

- 6. Who formulated this Vision 2025? Roles being eliminated, staff coming and going does not come off as an improvement. Not enjoying half-full gathering at 11am. Used to be much more rewarding and fulfilling. Don't enjoy other pastors coming in with more frequency. I love PCC.**

Answer: In the Spring of 2014, confronted with our Worship Center being at full capacity and the PCC parking lot turning away as many as 40 cars on a Sunday, PCC's Leadership Team (comprised of Lead Team Pastoral Staff and elected Leadership Team members) engaged in an 18-month process clarifying what we call our Vision Frame. The Vision Frame concisely gives the big picture for why we exist, the values that drive us, our ministry methodology, and a picture of our preferred future. After the frame was completed, the Leadership Team asked the Pastoral Staff for a strategic plan that would drive the ministry of PCC for the future, specifically in areas of staff, budget, priorities and ministry calendar. This strategic plan is what we refer as Vision 2025.

- 7. The vision of having 10% of RWC homes Christ-centered has been repeated often. What are the strategies for PCC to get there? Explain how these staff changes support these strategies.**

Answer: Over the past 13 years PCC Sunday gatherings have experienced cycles of growth, growing from ~700 adults in attendance to ~800 adults in attendance. Our experience has taught us that, without a strategic plan, our Farm Hill campus begins to interfere with the growth that is happening in our congregation. To reach 10% of homes, we set out to be prepared to not only receive growth, but capture the momentum of what God is doing and ensure that a full parking lot, full sanctuary, or full kids classroom would never again be a barrier to people coming to experience a Christ-centered community gathering.

Five key shifts detail the work of Vision 2025 and have implications on budget, programming, and staffing:

Church Centered to Mission Driven

One Campus to Multiple Gatherings

Programs to Pathways

General Tithing to Intentional Development

General Announcements to Intentional Communication

Specific to this question, shifting from one campus to multiple gatherings means that we are moving away from staffing centralized discipleship roles and re-prioritizing our spending to support pastoral care and leadership roles at each of our gatherings. The pastor of each gathering will be charged with small groups support, the Rooted experience, care, guest outreach, and teams of ministry volunteers. The desire in this change is to allow PCC to be more deeply cared for and more deeply connected within our gatherings while still being prepared for more growth.

Additionally, changes to the expectations of ministry leadership over the last decade, created by the increased gatherings, have required all long-time staff and leadership to assess each ministry department at PCC. This began in 2016 with Family Ministry, was followed in 2017-2018 with Worship Ministry, and is currently happening in People Development and Operations. We chose to spread out these changes over several years in order to reduce the impact on our PCC community. In the midst of those planned transitions, there has also been a convergence of some staff who have felt called out.

8. Is it possible to take a pause on this transition? I would proffer that PCC look into Natural Church Development (NCD) as an alternative means of determining what God is doing on the Peninsula and in this church and helping to establish a plan for aligning the church, as an entity, as well as its people to that end.

Answer: God has graciously given us the vision, mission, and credibility within our city. Given the renaissance our city and culture is undergoing, we actually marvel at how God led us into this vision to be Hope and Good News for our city. We have followed Jesus in faith, and as a community, understanding that while the paradigm shift we are undergoing is disruptive, it is necessary for the health of PCC, for PCC to become a radiant Bride and finally for PCC to live into her full redemptive potential as a church. We sense humble confidence with how God is using us and guiding us along the way. Transitions are necessary for growth.

9. Are we growing as a church? It seems like our numbers have dropped off or at least stalled.

Answer: Our attendance numbers have remained relatively steady since 2016, when we saw an increase with the launch of 9:05. However, we estimate that our congregation loses approximately 7-10% of its attendees each year for a variety of reasons, including those moving out of the area. Specifically, since January 2016, 64 new stakeholders have been welcomed in; and 58 stakeholders have left due to moving out of the area. So, some growth has been balanced by some attrition.

10. It seems like the growth of our church and the success of the vision are wholly dependent on a strong volunteer base. Getting volunteers is so hard in this area and very challenging. How will we support adding another church site when we don't have enough volunteers or staff to run our current sites?

Answer: We affirm that the strength of the church and the success of the vision is dependent on the work of the Holy Spirit in and through the many men and women that serve through volunteering. The importance of volunteering is in the very act of serving. A few affirmations about the heart of volunteerism as PCC are:

- Serving is the act of putting the needs of others first (Matthew 20:28).
- The chief goal of a ministry is to help people, both volunteers and participants, become like Jesus.
- We believe that a necessary part of becoming like Jesus is learning to be a servant.
- Serving opens people's hearts to God and is therefore part of worship.
- If people aren't serving, there is less opportunity to grow into a rich authentic faith.
- Mobilizing people for ministry is part of discipleship.

- The role of the Pastor/Staff is to equip people for ministry (Ephesians 4:11-13).

The ability of staff to invite volunteers into life giving service and to continually encourage the Christ-like development of each volunteer is critical to Vision 2025. This has led to all staff being called to reflect on their competencies in this area and it has been a factor in the current department restructures.

Every stakeholder at PCC has been asked to serve within the life of PCC. This is an area where we will continue to have challenging conversations. With that said, we will not thrive as a church without a shared commitment to one another, and those yet to know Jesus, through volunteering.

11. How are we measuring success for our current sites/services?

Answer: Measuring success in a worshipping community is an important process and one that is challenging due to the Spirit-led nature of conversion and growth. This very challenge is what makes metrics so important and why PCC's leadership is challenged to grow in this area. As we have moved into Vision 2025, our success metrics are attendance, guest follow-up, giving, volunteer engagement, participation in Rooted, participation in groups, local mission engagement, global mission engagement, new life in Christ, and baptisms.

12. What is our strategy for discipling women and people of color in our body and community? (I don't mean by having women and POC on staff or lead team, I mean how are we going to serve and offer pastoral care to the specific needs of these groups?) How will we learn what the needs are?

Answer: Our strategy for discipleship is not based on gender and race. It involves empowering the generations to passionately follow Jesus. In the end, this looks like individuals bringing the kingdom of heaven to earth within the context of their lives. In order to do this, we must create a space that is safe for all people to wrestle with Truth, encounter Jesus, and allow the Holy Spirit to guide them in the context of their lived experience, cultural norms and hardships. We acknowledge the challenge that PCC has its foundations built around a culturally and ethnically white congregation, led predominantly by men. So even though our intentions are honorable, we have many blind spots that can only be addressed by 1) empowering women and people of color within our congregation, 2) deconstructing the paradigm and culture of our historically white church, 3) connecting directly with our diverse Redwood City Community, 4) listening to the input from our Racial Justice Collective and Women Ministry leaders, and 5) relying on the expertise and example of our denomination.

13. Will our church ever be able to address homosexuality? The Covenant has published resources on transgender and a statement on sexuality, but no one talks about this issue except for pastors who have left our body. Silence is a statement and it's confusing.

Answer: We do hold to the [Evangelical Covenant Church belief](#) on this topic. Based on its sensitive nature and divisiveness, we have chosen to address it directly with individuals, staff, and small groups as need. For example, quarterly in our Discover Lunch, which is our orientation for new people checking out PCC, we do clarify our belief through discussion. Other examples include: after the SCOTUS 2015 ruling legalizing gay marriage, [Gary clarified PCC's view via his weekly Gmail](#), PCC held a evening congregational event, and have had various staff-wide discussions to help us understand how to hold our position with compassion. We would suggest meeting with an individual staff if you would like clarification and/or have other ideas. We do believe there are ways we can continue to grow in how we address gender and sexuality questions corporately, and believe there is more we can do in this area.

HUDSON

14. Hudson campus, how many new people attend from that local community?

Answer: Hudson initially launched with 55 adults last October and has experienced steady growth over the past 12 months. Today an average of 106 adults attend Hudson for Sunday worship and 130 adults are part of the Hudson community. Some of that growth is stakeholders from the Farm Hill gatherings relocating to Hudson, while 27 of those adults are new to PCC. These 27 individuals are not specifically from the Hudson/Oak neighborhood. Hudson's current Sunday capacity is 140 adults on a Sunday.

15. With the possibility of Hawes School closing, how will that impact PCC Hudson and will we consider moving our location to reach North Fair Oaks or east side parts of RWC?

Answer: PCC Hudson will relocate if necessary, but the question of where depends on the doors God opens through conversation and partnership with the Redwood City School District. We will consider moving our location to North Fair Oaks as part of that process.

16. Why did Hudson schedule an event during the same time as this town hall meeting?

Answer: The PCC Hudson community meal was scheduled in advance of the date for the Town Hall Meeting and is an important part of the strategy to connect with the new participants at Hudson. The purpose of the Town Hall is to be an available space for those that are seeking clarity about recent changes. Members of PCC Hudson have been encouraged to attend the Town Hall if they would like to.

GATHERINGS

17. Why the encouragement for people to identify with one of the gathering? The few people I've spoken with seem to enjoy the flexibility as well as the opportunity to meet many new people.

Answer: As PCC gets larger, we need to get smaller to stay connected and go deeper. We are operating under the model that a congregation under 300 people operates as a greater-connected community. As PCC grows in size and complexity, our hope is that people can invest in one gathering where they can be more deeply known. We will continue to have ministry offerings (kids and students, young adults, Bridges), events (Christmas, Easter), and serving opportunities (locally and globally) that cross gatherings.

18. PCC is embracing modern technology with gusto. This form is part of a computer program that will collate and publish members' questions. Is there a way to communicate with both tech savvy people and those less tech savvy that restores the notion of church "family?"

Answer: Embracing the modes of communication that many people use in other arenas of their lives is a way that we can remain relevant and connected as a church. However, PCC will always be a community where personal connection is valued, and we know that one size of communication does not fit all. Printed message notes, inserts, special event pamphlets/postcards, and response cards in our gatherings remain some of the ways that we can continue to communicate in a variety of ways.