

Respect the past

Welcome to the holiday season –

May God's blessing be on us all and we pray for Israel that the will of God be accomplished.

As we get ready for all together December and the revisioning of ROL into 2024

I believe it would be good to talk about what the filters are thru which we are processing revisioning and change.

A couple months ago I was praying and felt like these were filters to use in the transition

Respect the past - Look with fresh eyes - Hear my voice - I initiate I also permeate

Around that same time, I was reminded of a message Pastor Joe preached about the process:

Pilgrim – Pioneer – Settler – Occupier and the changes each bring

He also preached a message on being living stones, not bricks

Stones are natural and individually formed over time

bricks are the same – uniform and non-unique

God instructed to build altars out of stones not bricks – we are stones, not bricks

Opening prayer – Because of God we are here – not man

Today we are starting with **respect the past**

I have been inspired lately by Moses and reading thru the exodus as he leads the people into the wilderness and toward the promised land.

I am no Moses, but the principles still apply

When they came to major change points, he took time to review their history so they would remember from whence they came.

In my reading this morning Moses gives a detailed accounting of each place they camped for the past 40 years – I am not going to be that detailed

I want to take a few minutes to give a brief history of River of Life Community Church or originally Western Reserve Community Church

There are a lot of things ROL has been and done to bring us to this point in time of transition.

If we don't know the history, how can we respect the past

WRCC/ROL we started as **Pilgrims** (a person who journeys to a sacred place for religious reasons)

Pastor Joe Daltorio 27 years ago heard from the Lord to plant a church in Hudson

Started with the vision to be a Word and spirit church in Hudson (many said it will not last)

Began in a living room in 1997 – opposition from a denomination and local churches/spiritual

S+J came in 1999 in some crisis and the church was a safe place for us to heal.

We became **Pioneers** (a person who is among the first to explore or settle a new country or area.)

We became a mobile church, meeting in schools with a trailer and cabinets that had kids church – sound system – nursery and materials
Every week we pulled the trailer to the site, set up, met together and tear down at the school and then back to a garage for storage (10 years)

Then June 15, 2001 we purchased the property for \$400K – original hula hoop factory and building with tenants, and became **Settlers** – (a person who moves to a new place with the intention to stay there) making it our own and consecrating it to God
Tenants leases came to maturity and we began to take ownership of the building
Small remodeling/use existing building to have meetings and offices in.
The rent from the tenants helped offset the mortgage until we took full possession

As **settlers** many things were put into place
August 2003 set up offices in the back and parked the trailer in this building
2004/5 freedom prayer begins as a foundation – restoring people to freedom in Christ

As **settlers** we began to plan and dream about becoming **Occupiers**
Architect ½+ done with plans and suddenly dies – all hand written
New Architect and completed plans
In the midst of the banking crisis, we borrowed money and moved ahead with construction
2007/8 begin to remodel the building – many questioned the timing, but God said “keep going”
Prayer walked the land and set stakes with scripture
Wrote scripture on cement under the carpet – all ages and consecrated it to God
October 2007 Purchased property from Ms. Collins as she had agreed we would have right of 1st refusal – that gave us frontage on Stow Rd.

Occupiers (a person residing in or using a property as its owner) making this building and church what God had intended it to be – we took dominion – was this the original design for this building?

Final occupancy inspection – M. Collard walking the building
Walked the building with Pastor Joe and prayed cleansing and redemption over the building
February of 2009 1st church service in this building – aroma of Christ vs. attitude of past workers
Addition of café from a library – addition of kitchen and storage and additional bathrooms
Multiple staff pastors with wonderful giftings and talents
Body Aches prayer – cleanse past hurts and set clear path forward without spiritual residue
Used to be a polling center – the city started to be more intrusive and the season of doing this as a ministry ended.

As Occupiers we have:
a wonderful building with almost 20 acres with 70% equity
Sanctuary – café – kitchen – fellowship hall – kids areas - offices
Plenty of equipment for sound, cooking, kids activities, youth and fellowship outings

Which brings us to the present and becoming Transitioners (the process or a period of changing from one state or condition to another)

We stand with and build on the foundation others have laid with gratitude and humility

We acknowledge those that went before us and bring us to this place of opportunity

As we respect the past we have to look at what ROL originally set out to accomplish

Sunday morning mobile church with rented offices and home groups

Sunday morning church with a building and staff

House church with 3rd Wednesday meals

Difficult times of change with staff turnover and entered into a period of maintenance

Who can tell me what the ROL vision statement is ?

Picture of website opening page

Reconciling people to God

Restoring identity in Jesus Christ

Equipping disciples to transform the family, the church, the marketplace and the world

Reconciling people to God

The Greek word for reconciliation is “katallage,” which translates “restoration to favor,”

Reconciliation has much to do with transformation; it’s the moving from a place of separation, hurt, and brokenness to a place of healing, wholeness, forgiveness, and reunion.

It means letting people know that God is friendly toward them and He has proven this thru His Son Jesus Christ

2 Corinthians 5:19 that God was **reconciling** the world to himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

To be reconciled unto God means to no longer be under His wrath and to have friendship with Him. This was His plan at creation and through a lot of pain, He was able to purchase us back from hell by paying for our debt of sin.

Restoring identity in Jesus Christ

To bring back to or put back into a former or original state

WE are created by God in Genesis, it was thru the Word (Jesus) John 1

Understanding our created (pinnacle) position as Image bearers with the Original design that God had in mind when He knew you before you were born

Ps 139:13 For you created my inmost being; you **knit me together** in my mother’s womb

Identity speaks of rocks not bricks

If you are having trouble with this go back and listen to the message on be created in His image

Equipping disciples to transform the family, the church the marketplace and the world.

Training people to be more like Jesus

Christian education toward Godly worldview that will influence our:

Families – servant leadership, proper submission to one another and parenting

Marriage skills including how to communicate and problem solve

Kids –Prov 22:6 train up a child in the way they should go and when they are old they will not depart from it.

Church – what should the church act like in this age?

What do we need to do to hear “well done” as a church

Marketplace – taking the presence of HS with us - acting with integrity and honesty always!!

Modeling to all how to be courteous – honorable and respectful

Lead from the middle – easy to say, hard to do – set the example

World – not being afraid to look like Jesus in every circumstance –

Moses be strong and courageous. 11 times for the Lord is with you.

Being in His presence

Be the stone God wants me to be

Hear my voice

Be a community - Show community to surrounding area – service projects

Repentance is His kindness - Revelation comes before service - Listening to God

Multigenerational - Presence – Worship events – Hospitality - Praying

Biblical understanding and Education - Word and Spirit – prophetic protocols

Waiting as a lifestyle - Wholistically healthy – body – soul – spirit

Response:

Help me be a good transitioner

Where do I fit – as a stone not a brick

Very excited about all together December

Dec 3 different type of service as we begin this transition

Pray for strong presence of the Lord

Open heaven to hear from Him.

Discussion Questions

Where there parts of the ROL history that surprised you?

What excites you about the upcoming transition?

Had you ever considered the difference between stone and brick?