

Taking the Risk TOGETHER

August 9, 2020

Gary Rapp, Elder

Last week in this service, Elder Tom talked about how not only is LNBC entering into a time of transition based on Bobby's announcement but we also have the opportunity to truly becoming the church we need to be for our community.

We were challenged to embrace the concepts of **REPENT**, as Jesus mentioned to the church at Ephesus in Revelation 2; **RETURN** to being a church that God intends and **REIMAGINE** what LNBC could look like going forward and how we can make a significant difference in our community, state and the world.

Then we answered the first of three big questions - **What you can expect in terms of preaching in the months ahead ...** by giving you our commitment to strong pulpit preaching throughout the transition from our existing pastors, guest speakers, Elders and other church members as God has provided us great blessing in this regard.

Today, we pick back up by focusing on the other two questions:

- **What can you expect of the Elders throughout the transition?**
- **What do the Elders need/expect of you?**

Question 2 – What you can expect of the Elders throughout the transition?

As we looked to Scripture, we also came across a resource by Ed Stetzer and Thom Rainer (SBC thought leaders), that gave us some insight on today's church. The book entitled, "Transformational Church", studied thousands of churches and identified 7 dimensions of a church that have a Kingdom impact in their community, where people become more like Christ, where the church acts more

like the body of Christ and where the community becomes more of a reflection of the kingdom of God.

These dimensions are:

- **Missionary Mentality** – 1 Corinthians 9:22-23
- **Vibrant Leadership** – Matthew 20:27-28
- **Prayerful Dependence** – Psalm 116:1-2
- **Relational Intentionality** – Romans 1:11-12
- **Worship** – 1 Chronicles 16:25
- **Community** – Romans 1:11-12
- **Mission** – John 20:21

There is lots of work to be done, but here is how we are approaching this:

- **REDEFINE LNBC** to truly become a Transformational Church.
- **REFOCUS** align priorities to our vision statement.
- **REACT** prayerfully, boldly and courageously introducing changes that are needed.

Much work is to be done. We are committed and excited to take on this challenge together to make an impact on a lost and fallen world, as a church family. There will be opportunities for change, but with our desire is for any changes should to not be surprises. Rather they should be more of call to action that will lead to a “Let’s Go” moment as we seek to walk in a way pleasing to the Lord.

Pray

Serve

Engage

And that brings me to the last question, which is related to YOU:

Question 3 – What do the Elders need/expect from YOU?

PRAY

First and foremost, we need your prayers!

Colossians 1:9-11

9 For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;

10 that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

11 strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy;

Please pray specifically that we the Elders and the church will have:

- Godly wisdom
- Patience
- Boldness and Courage so that we can accomplish, along with you, all that the Lord in store for us at this corner of Lake Norman that will touch those in the community, the state and the world!
- And pray for the communities around us that God will begin to soften their hearts toward His Gospel.

SERVE

Ask, “What would You have me do?”, “How can I better serve You?”, “How can I reflect the image of Christ in my community?”

“Here I am. Send me.”

We would ask that you **use the gifts** God has given you:

I Corinthians 12:4-7 provides the expectation that Paul had of the church at Corinth, (read the passage)

4 There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

5 There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord.

6 And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all.

7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all.

Lastly, we also need you to tell us what you think right now about where we are in the life of LNBC! We want to hear from you, and as a first step we have a structured way that we are going to allow you to do just that.

ENGAGE

We are including you in this process and we want you to ENGAGE. We want to hear from you!! Your points of view are an important part of the foundation from which we start answering the big questions we need to answer.

The Elders have selected a church survey / assessment tool that we believe will be helpful in giving us your opinion on where our church currently stands relative to important dimensions of a Transformational Church.

The results of this assessment will help us understand where we are as a church at this point here in mid-2020; it will provide important information as we seek the Lord and HIS direction for HIS church at Lake Norman!

In September we will be asking for ALL of you to participate in this assessment. It is important to open and honest in your responses, so we have the most accurate starting point in our self-evaluation.

Please take this request to complete the assessment as seriously as we do; it is important that we hear from each of you, because all of us together..... WE are the CHURCH!!

Closing

So again, “where do we go from here?”. As you can imagine based on all I have shared today, there is still much to do on this journey. Here are some summary thoughts on what you have heard in these last couple of weeks:

- Bobby's decision to begin a retirement process DOES NOT lessen the importance of the larger body of work of REDEFINE and REFOCUS. We need to work through those efforts before we immediately engage an internal search team or an external search partner.
- On that note, ensuring that our church has strength in all facets of leadership (shepherding, teaching, strategic oversight and tactical execution) remains a very high priority. And that means not only in the long-term but also in the short-term; and we believe that among the other pastors currently on staff and our Elder Council that we are very well positioned to cover all of these areas – including weekly preaching - while we continue down the path of answering the bigger questions.
- As was stated earlier, we want to have a transformative impact to our community for the Gospel where:
 - People are becoming more like Christ
 - The church acts more like the body of Christ
 - The community becomes more a reflection of the Kingdom of God.
- We are not satisfied with being CARE-TAKERS, we want to boldly go forth with you, in Prayerful Risk Taking for the glory of God!!
 - Remember that picture Elder Tom showed us of a ship, which is safe in the harbor, but that is not what it was made to do. We are not here to just to listen to good preaching we are here to make an impact on this community for the Kingdom.
- As Elder Tom mentioned last week as he spoke of the Parable of the Talents; let's strive together as the church at Lake Norman to invest that which God has given us, use your gift, bear HIS fruit, serve the Lord with passion and joy for HIS glory!!
- Our commitment to you is frequent communication and strong transparency as we continue this process that has already begun over the coming weeks and months. Our next step will be to get the Transformational Church survey out to you in September.

- Until then, know that our doors are open to comments, questions and feedback – we encourage you to take advantage of it, you can always use : elders@lnbc.com.

As Bobby stated a couple of weeks ago, you and I are all “PHILLIP”; an ordinary person who loves Jesus Christ and was ready to go “all in”, for HIM and HIS kingdom work! We have much to do in the days ahead and we have a great door of opportunity in this community to move through! Join us, by faith, as we follow our great Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

We have been blessed with a senior pastor who has 23 + years providing leadership in building a Biblical foundation at LNBC. He has created a legacy that is truly a blessing to carry forward and we anticipate with great excitement our journey as we “Take the Risk ... Together”, at Lake Norman Baptist Church!