

September 18, 2016

## An Open Letter to the Members and Friends of Westminster

“WHAT’S THE BIG DEAL WITH FANNING THE FLAME? I DON’T SEE ANYTHING HAPPENING!” Does that thought pass through your mind every now and then? If so, you’re not alone. However, it may encourage you to know that even though there’s not a lot of evident or material change, a lot of “behind the scenes” work is going on.

Why are we doing Fan the Flame? A little history may help. Over the years, it has become evident that our leadership “pool” has diminished. Few have been willing or able to undertake teaching and many of the active ministries in which WPC has been engaged over the last five decades have had to be dropped for lack of either interest or capable leaders. Discipleship training is one of the areas that the Session recognized as a great need. Our once full evening services and corporate prayer times have seen interest drop dramatically even though those who do attend can attest to the fact that a rich & great blessing is there. While we as a congregation may have great times around a meal, our biblical spiritual fellowship has taken a hit. The evidence is that Christ’s letter through the Apostle John to the church at Ephesus in Rev 2:1-7 may very well apply to Westminster. Something was amiss.

In recognition that the Church was in need of revitalization, the Session investigated and recommended that our members consider and commit to undertaking a restoration of our Church’s ministry through the *Embers to a Flame* program and the process of “Fanning the Flame.” Therefore, at a called meeting of the membership early this year, the members of Westminster voted by a large margin to accept the Session’s recommendation. Since then, to many, it would appear that nothing concrete has taken place. That’s because the “concrete” hasn’t been poured yet.

Now back to the question: Why don’t we see any progress? As with any construction or reconstruction project, the slow and unglamorous, but highly vital & necessary, ground work must be accomplished properly lest the structure collapse if not put on a solid footing. The same is true whether a new structure is built or a renovation project is undertaken. So, while you don’t see obvious results, your FTF Team has spent the last six months “pushing dirt” and working on making sure the church, the body of Christ, is set on solid ground and will flourish until Jesus returns. As Coach Joe Weatherly puts it, “You can do it fast or you can do it right!” The foundation must be right and Westminster’s FTF is committed to doing it right!

Thus far your FTF Servant Team has identified areas of excellence in which the Church must become involved and the strategies which need to be employed to bring them about. Key to accomplishing these goals is building community & life experiences through sharing our lives (fellowship), prayer, teaching (using Christ’s model as He disciplined the twelve apostles), service (again, following Christ’s model as He sent out his followers two by two), and accountability.

In learning to implement these things, your Team has listened to Pastor Harry Reeder's message to pastors entitled "Creating a Climate for Change" and discovered the need to carefully go about bringing healing to a congregation that has suffered the sometimes sly attacks of Satan. Other means to bring encouragement to God's people at WPC through your FTF Team have been & will continue through various book reports either given by the Elders or members. All are designed to help us seek more deeply the Lord's fellowship through repentance where that's needed and restoration where the church has left its first love. The foundation for all these things is prayer!

Next month your Prayer Coordinators, Nellie & Jason Tate, will introduce the Armor-bearer Ministry. The Tates are responsible to serve as leaders for the prayer initiatives for the church's FTF process. They serve as liaison between WPC & the Embers Ministries prayer team with our prayer needs. They also assist the church leadership in establishing and executing a Shepherd's Prayer Process that has the church leaders praying for every member by name on a regular basis. It is up to the Tates to assess the church's personality & culture and determine the most effective way to implement a short term small prayer group focused on helping every member who chooses to participate to deepen their personal prayer life. Lots to do! Please keep them in your prayers. The enemy doesn't want them to succeed; however, with God's protection & your prayer support they will be upheld in their ministry on the church's behalf!

If you have any(!) questions or comments or other perplexities, please feel very comfortable about contacting any of your FTF Servant Team members:

Pastor Shelby Moon  
RE Fred Schreiber (Spiritual Gifts Coordinator)  
Deacon Randy Steinhoff (Strategic Plan Document)  
Les & Bobbie Cover (Administrators)  
Carla Curtis (Historian)  
Matt McMillan (Communications Manual Coordinator)  
Cathe Prather (Small Group Task Force Coordinator)  
Jason & Nellie Tate (Prayer Coordinators)

Please join us in praying and looking forward to seeing what our gracious and loving Heavenly Father has for Westminster in years to come!

On behalf of your FTF Servant Team,

THE SESSION of WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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