



THE PATH FORWARD

Taking Steps Together

October 28, 2018

Dear Church Family,

Several years ago when we outlined this season of transitions, we planned to assess the ministries of our church, to evaluate how we are doing in reaching the vision *“to be a thriving diverse urban church sharing Christ’s love and serving the needs of our local and global communities”* that God has blessed us with, and to host multiple congregational conversations to see where God might lead us next. The goal was to do all of this by June 2019, when our Sr. Pastor transition was originally supposed to take place. With that transition happening in October 2018, this plan needed to be re-worked.

In coming up with **a path forward**, we consulted with Bishop Bryan Hoke, as well as several other churches and leaders who have gone through similar transitions. We were strongly advised against doing assessment and evaluation of ministries in my first year as Sr. Pastor. The counsel consistently given was that in my first year, I should be focused on building relationships and establishing new rhythms as Sr. Pastor (overseeing staff, counseling, preaching more regularly, etc.) while also intentionally connecting and orienting to the congregation.

With our recent summer additions to the staff, as well as others on the staff shifting responsibilities, it may be wise to consider that we are in the midst of multiple transitions. In conjunction with the Church Board, we have outlined **a three-year cycle** that we believe will best gift the church, the staff, and me as the new Sr. Pastor success. The cycle will look like this:

- **Nov 2018- Aug 2019, Year One (Orientation):** being intentional about connecting with the congregation and building and strengthening relationships with congregation and staff.
- **Sept 2019 – Aug 2020, Year Two (Evaluation):** assessing who we are and what we do.
- **Beginning Sept 2020, Year Three (Implementation):** putting all that we learned and prayerfully decided to do into motion.

Moving assessing and evaluating to 2020 frees up the church board and staff in 2019 to work on the following **present priorities**:

- **Assimilation**
 - Determine how to better receive, welcome, and disciple newcomers.
 - Determine how to better engage and disciple existing members and attenders who are not engaged in the way we would hope beyond a Sunday morning worship experience.
- **Planning**
 - Determine how we are going to assess who we are and what we do.
 - Design spaces and opportunities for congregational conversations on the future.
- **Develop an HBIC Partnership Policy**
 - Partnering is one of our core values and a great tool in helping us to more effectively serve our church and community.
 - We need guidelines that will help us work out a more sustainable partnership strategy.



Lastly, I would like to personally invite you to an all-church congregational conversation on Monday November 12th, from 7-8 pm in the sanctuary. The purpose of this meeting will be to give verbal sponsorship to this plan and to receive any comments and questions you may have.

Thank you for your continued faithfulness and service to the Lord and our congregational family. Thank you also for taking the time to read this, I ask that you continue to pray for our church. We're very blessed for the work God has used us to do, and I am excited for the work still ahead.

God bless and take care.

In Christ,

Pastor Hank

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future." – Jeremiah 29:11

If you were unable to join us for worship last Sunday (October 21st), please take a moment to reflect on the transition details shared through the following:

- **Morning Message:** "Perfectly United in Mind and Thought" – visit the "sermon" link on our website (HBIC.Church) to listen to our morning message with John Yeatts.
- **Concert of Prayer bulletin insert:** visit the "resources" link on our website to read and reflect on Keith Chase's Concert of Prayer meditation: "Reflection on Transitions: A Positive, Helpful, and Healthy Approach"