

## Jeff's Sabbatical (November 11, 2021)

### 1. Beginning and Ending Dates.

- a. Sabbatical to begin on December 13, 2021 and run through Feb 14.

### 2. Plans for the Sabbatical include:

- a. Rest for my own mental health issues. I frequently feel discouraged and depressed, and would describe myself as simply – depleted.
- b. Plan several “alone times” for a day or two, focused on prayer, Bible reading, and journaling. Possibly, in the first few weeks, not try to “figure anything out.” Use Perry’s cabin. Go to a monastery.
- c. In addition to simply resting, I will establish some kind of relationship with a therapist or spiritual director for mental health and to offer insight and feedback on what’s going on. Consider Philip Matheny’s neighbor as a possibility, and Terry Smith, in Nashville.
- d. Establish connections with resources on managing ministry in 2021, like Jim Martin at Harding Graduate School and Kent Blake in Memphis, Dale Robinson in Indy, Arthur Sutherland in Baltimore, Phil Gold, and Bob Grigg, and others who might be attune to the current challenges. Some of these connections would be by phone, others in-person.
- e. Travel to meet face to face with other leaders to get a fresh perspective on ministry.
- f. Visit other churches to worship, feed my spirit, and to observe models, and ministries.
- g. Develop some key points of focus for remaining years of full and part-time ministry after Sabbatical.

### 3. Possible effect on other ministers and staff members workload.

- a. A couple of concerns is the morale of Jeremy who is willing to take on some of the Senior Minister responsibilities, and possibly Elizabeth as she seems as though she is often in need of a break.
- b. I believe my Sabbatical will be an opportunity for Jeremy to step up to do some of the preaching, and leadership. I have outlined this below. I understand that giving Jeremy a block of the preaching may be met with mixed views, however, he has invested in preacher training over the past year.
- c. The challenge will be the unexpected – a death, or a funeral, for instance.
- d. Elders continue to meet with staff on Tuesdays. I will send out a new schedule.

### 4. How job responsibilities will be handled in my absence.

- a. The good thing is I have been doing less in the past few months than I ever have in my ministry! This is telling in itself! I have already scaled back, mostly due to COVID, breakfast and lunches with members.
- b. This fall I stopped the Unity in Diversity meetings, I turned over my Connect Group Leadership to Dave Weiler, I gave up leading the Area Wide Minister’s Meetings, and I have asked Don to lead the Road to Reopening meetings, so a good workload transition has already taken place. The new member conversations and engagement in the past has currently dried up, as well.
- c. Vision Casting. Priorities and Plans 2022. An important part of my energies has gone into thinking about the future – plans, priorities, etc. I recommend that the Core Leadership Elders continue to meet to think about and take action on these things. Have Jeremy attend these meetings. The first 4 below of highest priority.
  - i. Hiring for Heather’s position.
  - ii. Auditorium renovation and upgrade.
  - iii. Roll-out signs and banners for 2022 them – The Story of Our Lives. (These signs can and should incorporate many of the good intentions of the Unity in Diversity team)
  - iv. Next Steps – QR Code project. (Almost there – Jeremy has details)
  - v. Hiring for Jeff’s replacement, including development of job description. (in my opinion, we can probably wait until the start of summer for this one).
  - vi. Video projects / testimonies. (Currently budgeted for one video per month for 2022)
  - vii. Identifying and securing a “Body-life” Champion and team. (This is very important, however, currently hampered by COVID)

- viii. Hiring a Next Gen Outreach Minister. (This is not a priority, until we determine that we have the funding and are ready to move forward.)
  - ix. Plan and kick off Food Pantry meals and outreach.
- d. Sunday Preaching. Obviously, the biggest responsibility is the Sunday planning – what series, what theme, what passages, preparation and delivery. I will lay out a simple approach to this and determine series, theme, title, and speaker by Dec 1. Jeff to preach on Dec 5 to complete Gentle and Lowly series. Jeff to preach 1<sup>st</sup> Advent sermon on Dec 12. Proposal:
- i. Christmas Series – Heaven to Earth
    - 1. Dec 5 – Start Christmas Series – Jeff preach.
    - 2. Dec 12 – Advent Series Jeff preach 2<sup>nd</sup> sermon.
    - 3. Dec. 19 – Steve Haupt to preach.
    - 4. Dec 24 – Christmas Eve - Jeremy to plan.
    - 5. Dec 26 – Christmas service – The Greatest Gifts of Christmas - Keaton Jones do 10-12 minute talk and Michalie do 10 minute talk. I have the idea prepared.
  - ii. The Story of Our Lives (7 Values to Shape Our Future)
    - 1. Jan 2 – Spirit-led (Jeremy preach)
    - 2. Jan 9 – Family (Jeremy preach)
    - 3. Jan 16 – Diversity (Jeremy preach)
    - 4. Jan 23 – Next-Gen (Jeremy preach)
    - 5. Jan 30 – Adaptable (Lane Hamm preach)
    - 6. Feb 6 – Generous (Don Fitzgerald preach)
    - 7. Feb 13 – Missional (Steve Walker preach)
- e. Adult Bible Class. (December) The Psalms will continue through December. I will lay out each class and find a teacher for each week.
- f. Adult Bible Class. I believe I have a good idea. Michalie and Steve Awtrey co-lead a class in the Gym that is intergenerational, uses our current model of sitting at tables, and invites teens, parents, and older members to share the Scripture together, using the Book of James. Beginning January for 8 weeks.
- g. New Worship team to work with Jeremy on Worship Planning, beginning with Advent and Christmas season.
- h. Have staff do self-reviews this year, and meet with an elder to discuss their self-review.
- i. Elder Meetings. Turn Elder Meeting planning and communication over to Elders. Next meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 15. Jeff is out. Steve Haupt to lead.
- j. Staff Meeting. (Tuesday at 11:00) Jeremy to lead. Elder invited to attend Jeff to send out new rotation.
- k. Next Gen meetings can continue without me, Jeremy leads. Provide update one time per month at Elders' meeting.
- l. Have Jeannie meet with select Ministry Leaders. I will prioritize those ministries.
- m. New member ministry. Have Jeannie work with a Shepherd to follow-up with families, as needed. As I indicated above, this is slow at this time.
- n. Prior to December 13, finish 2022 Calendar and key dates with staff. Have calendar to handout to congregation on January 2.
- o. Pastoral – Have one elder and one staff be designated as point person for congregation as needs arise. Communicate this to the church. I have asked Jeremy to be staff contact and Steve Awtrey to be Shepherd contact.
- p. Dolores to prepare Shepherd's Prayer each week. Elder for that week to discern which items need communicated to church.
- q. Christmas Eve Service – Jeremy to plan. Topic – Advent Candle 4 – Heaven to Earth – Peace.
- r. No Pancake Breakfast.

## 5. Physical Location and Contact Information

- a. Locations will vary.
- b. Cell #314-537-6912