

August 24, 2020

Dear Gold Avenue Church Family,

We are writing to ask for your prayerful feedback about a ministry idea that bubbled up as we have spent time in prayer, asking the Lord how He would have us move forward as a church. We are in a season where concerns about COVID and virus spread continue and both our nation and world seem to be shaking and in great turmoil (Haggai 2:6-7). We believe the Lord is strongly urging us to focus our efforts on equipping the church to make disciples amidst this changing environment. As we have been praying and seeking God's guidance, these things have been impressed upon us:

1. Our church family misses and desires "in person" connections, even if they are smaller than a corporate worship gathering of our whole church family.
2. We sense an urgency to prepare the church for the times we are living in. There will likely be more turbulence ahead, and we don't believe that God wants us to try to "just maintain" during this time. We believe He wants us to actively advance His Kingdom and bring the hope of Jesus to a dying and hurting world. Each one of us is called to "go and make disciples." This is an urgent need and opportunity that God is providing us with, as we all interact with our families and neighbors.
3. We have a strong sense that we need to focus as a church on growing as disciple makers! Preaching sermons faithful to the Word of God is helpful in making disciples of Jesus, but it **MUST** be accompanied by practices and encouragement and accountability that helps each person to grow in obedience to Jesus.
4. In order to grow as disciple makers, each of us needs to not only grow deeper roots in the gospel, but also to grow in the practice of leading others to Jesus and helping them grow to maturity in Jesus through study of Scripture, prayer, obedience to the Lord, and a life full of his Holy Spirit.

Thus, the idea that we are asking you to imagine and give feedback upon is this: **Gold Avenue Church would move to a rotating rhythm of corporate worship and small group discipleship¹ as follows:**

1. Every other week, we would continue to create an At Home Liturgy to be used by individuals and families, until such time as it is deemed appropriate to resume some form of in-person worship at the church building.
2. On the alternate weeks, small groups of 8-12 people would meet together (either in backyards, homes, public spaces, or on Zoom) to do Bible Study, prayer and encourage one another to grow as a disciple of Jesus. Our plan is to have the groups use a curriculum we are developing called ***The Gospel Tool***, which many of you have already

¹ At this time, we don't want to speculate about whether we would reverse this decision in the future. Our sense is to take a step of faith, clothed in obedience, and trust that God will continue to lead us in the right path at the right time.

viewed and offered helpful feedback. We also envision a coordinated sermon series to accompany the small group curriculum.

We recognize that there are many details and administrative questions about such a change, such as how groups would be formed, who would lead the groups, etc... At this point, we don't want to get bogged down in the details. Once we have heard your input on our new church rhythm, then we will reach out to ask for your input on the details.

As we gather at John Ball Park on Wednesday, August 26 at 6:00pm, we look forward to having time to connect with one another, share more about this idea and hear initial feedback from each of you.

We will also be sending out a follow up questionnaire after the park gathering, so that all will be able to participate in giving feedback, both at the park gathering, and afterwards. We look forward to connecting with you Wednesday night in the shade-be sure to bring your own chairs and water bottles, as it sounds like it might be a warm evening!

Grace and Peace,
Nancy VanNoord, Acting Admin Elder Chair