

QBC Transition Update 1

April 12, 2021

Dear Queensway Family,

Several in the congregation have requested an update on our current state, including the status of our pastoral transition, as well as requesting better communication from Council. We apologize for not having communicated very effectively over the last year. We are aware of your concerns. Please rest assured of our genuine desire to lead and communicate as effectively as possible during these challenging times. Not by way of excuse, but rather in the interest of clarity, please know that the departure of Pastor Deane, combined with the unprecedented challenges of the pandemic, created a myriad of issues leading to an extremely busy and stressful year. One of the effects was to interfere with our ability to keep communication channels as open as we would have liked. For that, we apologize, and trust that this first communication will help to contextualize our failure in that regard.

Past

We begin by acknowledging the pain and confusion that is felt by a number of those in our congregation due to the fallout from various ministry decisions made in recent years. Both the pastoral team and Council are working to address these issues. We have given Pastor Lloyd a mandate to make himself available to hear all those desiring to communicate their feelings and concerns. Please do not hesitate to reach out to him directly, through Council, or through Nicole in the office. It is our sincere desire that, over the coming months, you will all feel heard and your pain acknowledged, as we work towards reconciliation and unity.

We also acknowledge that part of those hurts are related to confusion resulting from the departure of Pastor Deane in March 2020. The pandemic made closure difficult, leaving an emotional void, and lack of an appropriate congregational grieving process. There is a high level of uncertainty, with many asking, "What is next?" However, some of the specific concerns that we have heard amount to direct misinformation about Pastor Deane's departure, so we wanted to take a moment to clarify an important point: Pastor Deane was not pressured or asked to resign by Council or anyone in church leadership. He discerned that God was calling him away and responded in obedience. To be clear, no one in church leadership initiated the idea that it was time for him to end his ministry at Queensway.

Last year we began a process to address the concerns of the past and move forward as a congregation. In June 2020 we invited Dr. Mark Boughan to help us begin our transition process. Throughout July and August 2020, he began a program of teaching and congregational surveys, engaging in as many conversations as could be managed, given that much of his endeavors were hampered by COVID restrictions. Dr. Boughan's work culminated in a report offering insights about the critical nature of our situation, the need for relational healing and a very clear recommendation that Council seek an Interim Pastor with a demonstrated aptitude in that area. In September 2020 Council's search for an Interim Pastor resulted in calling Pastor Lloyd who began serving with us in November. Pastor Lloyd comes with

experience and specialized training in transitional ministry, and he has a deep heart for bringing our congregation together.

Present

With the extensive time allocations for the Church Budget as well as the logistics of the Annual General Meeting now completed, and with Pastor Lloyd established and moving slowly forward, Council now finds itself in a position to re-focus on the transition process begun in June 2020. *It is imperative that you understand that we expect this transitional process to be ongoing for some time.* We have no intention of establishing a pastoral search team until we address the required preliminary work first.

There are a number of issues facing our congregation and it is prudent that we review our situation in order to better understand our present strengths, weaknesses and potential obstacles that would mitigate against a new pastor's effectiveness. To that end, we are currently reviewing all of the ways our church functions. This would include an examination of leadership structure, leadership expectations, mission statements, ministries, missions, and other related policies. We want to ensure that our church has a unified sense of vision and purpose before we bring a new pastor into the mix.

We also hope to make significant strides toward healing the relational issues within the church before we begin the search for a new pastor. The pandemic makes this process more challenging since healing comes through being able to meet with one another. We ask for your prayers, patience, and participation as we come together relationally and spiritually for this important process. In the meantime, we are blessed to have Pastor Lloyd to assist in these efforts as he performs pastoral care and leads our preaching team that was established in June 2020. If you have not yet connected with him, we would encourage you to do so.

Future Unknowns

We are doing everything in our power to understand your concerns about the future of Queensway. Obviously, only God knows the future! Yet, we remain committed to a process that seeks to discern His will as we move forward. All this to say that we acknowledge there to be very large "unknowns".

The first "unknown" is the size of our congregation when we are able to gather "in-person" as a full congregation. We are almost certainly a smaller worship family than in 2019 when we averaged 127 on a Sunday morning. Our *best guess* is that we will have anywhere between sixty to eighty in attendance. But again, we do not know for sure. This may come as a shock, especially when we see it with our own eyes.

Some may wonder what this means for the number of services we will run on Sunday mornings once restrictions are lifted. We remind the congregation that a second service was introduced as a response to overcrowding. Since we expect a significant decrease in Sunday attendance, it follows that a return to a single Sunday morning worship service is probable.

The second "unknown" has already been discussed. When will we form a search team for a permanent Lead Pastor? Again, we reiterate that, to even begin to develop a job description, requires Queensway to

be well on its way to having a unified sense of vision, showing significant strides towards relational healing and a functional church structure that is consistent with the size of our congregation's financial and human resources. Current gathering restrictions make these tasks challenging, which is why we cannot say when the search process will begin. Obviously, we have a lot of work to do!

Future Commitments

Even though these challenges exist, we want to assure the congregation of Council's commitment to navigating God's path through these uncertain times. We also remain committed to our inter-generational identity, continuing to be a place where kids, youth, adults, and seniors of all walks of life can worship together. We anticipate that this will include a blended style of worship, consisting of traditional hymns and contemporary songs as well as the provision for Sunday morning programming for children, youth activities and seniors functions. It is our desire for Queensway to regain its joyful history of family celebrations. We will continually aim to break down barriers so that we may attain that "one body" that the Apostle Paul so beautifully described in his letters to various early churches.

Council takes seriously the call given His Church by our Lord and Saviour to make disciples of all nations. Rest assured that along with the new opportunities God will bring, we will continue to support our historic community outreach efforts. For example, Queensway Christian Preschool and Kids Camp will continue. We also remain committed to missions, including the financial support of missionary efforts at home and abroad. That being said, we are, of course, dependent on God's provision of financial and human resources for all of these ministries, as we take seriously our responsibility for prudent management of what He provides.

Final Remarks

We hope this provides a reasonable overview of our present reality and future aspirations. For all the challenges and uncertainty, Council wants to make it clear that we are optimistic about the future of Queensway. As Romans 8:31 says, "If God is for us, who can be against us?" Thus, we believe that God can and will use the Queensway *that we are becoming!* As we keep God at the centre of everything, we believe that His glory will prevail! We welcome any discussion pertaining to these matters, and invite you to contact any member of Council or the pastoral team for further discussion. May God bring us unity and peace as we walk this path together.

Your servants in Christ,
Queensway Council:

Sean Robin (Moderator)
Lorraine Carmichael
Rick Elliott
Dave Saraiva
Mel Willetts
Pastor Lloyd Lindsay (ex-officio)
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