



**MISSION TO
KIRKLAND**

FEBRUARY 2010

The Case for a MISSION TO KIRKLAND

A Missional Church

Darrell Guder popularized the term “missional church” ten years ago with his book of the same title that called the North American church to not merely **send** missionaries to the world, but **be** missionaries to their community. The call reminds us that God has a **purpose** for the Church. I believe our congregation, The Chapel at Cedar Park, has done a good job of describing that purpose in our creedal statement:

- To **Worship** the Triune God in His majesty, for His works and His love;
- To **Edify** the believers, maturing them in Christian faith and service; and
- To **Proclaim** the gospel and reach out in acts of love, charity and social justice to our community and the world.

The Chapel’s Leadership Council has given special attention to this idea of being “missional” over the past several months. I think I can accurately summarize our conclusions in these terms:

1. The Chapel is comprised of **missional people**. Most of our people have an extraordinary commitment to personally carrying out **the Mission of God**. Unusually high concentrations of our

people have even dedicated their vocational lives to Christian work. Many are devoted to volunteer service and leadership in truly remarkable ways. Our qualification as a missional *church* is best demonstrated by our missional *people*.

2. Our church’s commitment to **world missions** is admirable, including our support of missionaries, our sending of missionaries, and our congregants’ personal participation in world missions endeavors.
3. In regard to the three purposes we have specified in our creedal statement, we are strongest in the first two; we have more work to do in **reaching out to our community**.

Several weeks ago our sermon series brought us to Matthew 5:14-16.

“You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others,

that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”

In the sermon, I proposed that one of our biggest hurdles in being effective Christians is that we may be *too comfortable* in our church buildings... that the bushel/bowl/basket under which we most frequently hide God’s light is the church itself. Our communities may not be seeing the light because we *turn up the light* the brightest inside the walls of our churches; sometimes the walls of our churches are rather opaque, keeping the light inside.

In thinking about our church being more missional, specifically in regard to our church being light to our communities, we are concluding that, in some ways, our church is *double walled*. We are a church wrapped up in another church, and sometimes our “light” seems buried deep inside.

Even when inviting others to come see the light inside our church, our circumstances may setup a number of ***hurdles***. While our association with Cedar Park has been vital to our inception and growth as a congregation, we are often confused with Cedar Park Church, as well as the ministries of The Chapel of the Resurrection Funeral Home and Mausoleum.

Starting on January 3, we will be faced with another potential hurdle of confusion when Cedar Park Church launches a video venue in the chapel at 9:00.

Opportunity for Change

We are truly grateful for the eight years we have enjoyed as a church on Cedar Park’s campus. Clearly the hurdles portrayed above aren’t ***barriers***, only ***hurdles***, because we have accomplished a great deal of meaningful ministry in this partnership with Cedar Park.

But could it be that the most ***missional*** thing we could do to start our ninth year together is to purposefully become missionaries to a community? Could it be time to actually ***move out into a community?***

Furthermore, it may be that the most missional use of the chapel building in this next season of years is precisely the ***venue*** approach that Cedar Park is launching. Could it be that the most missional step for that physical space is for us to enable Cedar Park to take full advantage of the chapel on Sunday mornings, allowing them to easily launch their 9:00 venue and even run their venue at 10:45 too? Many of the hurdles referenced above aren’t hurdles at all when the service in the chapel is more precisely a direct extension of Cedar Park. We anticipate that the venue will be a success.

We have secured an opportunity to locate our church on the campus of Northwest University for the purpose of mobilizing our congregation as missionaries to Kirkland's Houghton neighborhood. While it would certainly require commitments of extra work, it appears that it is possible that we could worship in the University's chapel on Sunday mornings.

Name

The move presents an opportunity to identify our congregation with a new name. So as to not confuse the church with the Northwest University Chapel program, we will want to change from our current *brand*; we could be served well to stay away from names that include words like *Chapel, Cedar Park, Northwest, or University*.

We have had an ongoing discussion among the Leadership Council regarding a new name, considering various perspectives, including:

- Revisiting the discussion we had a few years ago when we considered renaming the church.
- Theological and biblical basis.
- Marketing considerations.
- Historical background of both our church and the neighborhoods and region we want to reach.

Leaders have been particularly interested in the stories that

revealed that the original name of Houghton (the village in which the University resides that was annexed by Kirkland in the 70s) was *Pleasant Bay*.

We are considering a choice that would rename the congregation with a move to Kirkland:

Pleasant Bay CHURCH

We like the way it sounds, and follows some conventions of successful church names (3 simple words). Since our congregation is motivated to serve the community, we appreciate the tie to the historic name of the community we want to serve, but it also does not necessarily tie us to a neighborhood should there be cause for another move in the future. ***Pleasant Bay Church*** seems like a name that could suit our congregation, offers flexibility for our ministry together, and could accompany invitations to our friends and neighbors well.

It is our hope that the congregation will support this name.

Ministry Partnership with Cedar Park Church

We will have opportunity to continue ministry partnership with Cedar Park, including youth, Divorce Care, prayer and

teaching. We can continue along the established path, partnering with Cedar Park in ministries that work for all of us, and establishing distinct ministries for our congregation when it appears that we will be able to serve people best with a more focused approach.

Responsibilities to our Hosts

The church will continue to operate as a branch church of Cedar Park. Due to the change in facilities and shared services, the financial responsibility should be more along the lines of what other branch churches budget for *allocation* (that portion of our budget dedicated to meeting the overhead expenses), approximately 25% of the current level. This significant decrease in financial responsibility to Cedar Park should provide much of the resources needed to fund new obligations associated with the move.

As a branch church, Cedar Park will maintain managerial oversight our church. With a different level of dependence associated with the change in location, the level of coordination may change as well.

Northwest University has agreed to provide facilities for the church in consideration of a flexible payment based on use and revenue; the church should compensate the University for

the facility use at a rate of 10% of undesignated revenue from tithes and offerings. We have agreed to review this arrangement in six months, and then will likely review annually in June of each year.

Replanting the Congregation

One metaphor that seems to be helpful to people when considering the move is replanting the congregation. It could be that our congregation has reached our full potential in Cedar Park's greenhouse. We may be ***root bound*** in our current comfortable environs. Much like a greenhouse-raised plant, it could be that our congregation will not experience the next natural stage of growth without a new *pot* and a new environment. This congregation is strong and healthy, and ready for growth and new challenges.

This is what compels us. If we are intent to ***fulfill the mission of God***, and we sense that we have *maxed out* our capacity to fulfill that purpose, for whatever reasons... then we simply must be open to change. We cannot be satisfied with only fulfilling part of our purpose; nor can we be satisfied with a smaller portion of God's mission if we feel that He is calling us to so much more... especially if we sense that He is providing opportunity.

Growth

While we have effective ministry in our current circumstances, it appears that we will have to grow in order to reach critical mass for effective ministry with a move to Kirkland. In practical terms, goals for the coming months and few years could include:

- Building leadership to start and sustain children's ministries on the new site.
- Growing revenue so as to support an office in Houghton, with a schedule of regular hours, potentially in University-owned property.
- Providing opportunity for our congregation's first full-time member of the pastoral staff.
- At least double the size of worship services as quickly as possible.

I would like for us to consider and be able to deploy Laurie as our first full-time pastor. Continuing to serve the congregation as a pastoral team, Laurie has demonstrated that she has the skills to lead in matters ranging from administration, coordination, and pastoral care. While it might be usual to think of a senior pastor or lead pastor as the first *full timer*, our unique circumstances as a pastoral team make this a good next step for our congregation.

Timeline

We could consider the following basic timeline:

12/27/09 – Distribute a document and have another conversation with our congregation, calling them to vote for support of this plan.

1/3/10 – Coexist with Cedar Park's video venue, downsizing our regular Sunday morning worship service in order to accommodate their 9:00 program in the chapel.

January – Finalize details with Northwest University, as well as build a more comprehensive plan for the move and launch of Pleasant Bay Church (including an evangelism/marketing plan for the *official* launch).

February – *Beta test* Pleasant Bay Church (version 0.1) with our regular congregation in Butterfield Chapel.

March – Officially launch Pleasant Bay Church in our new location.

Practical Matters

There are a number of practical matters that we will be addressing, including:

- We will likely not have nurseries or children's ministries for some time at the onset of the move.
- Storage is very limited at Butterfield Chapel. We

may need to come up with a creative solution (such as purchasing a trailer) to accommodate the needs of our congregation.

- We anticipate that some members of our congregation will not make the move with us, which will impact our ministry effectiveness and revenue.

Call to Action

Since first presenting these ideas to our congregation and other leaders in early November, the discussion has continued. This proposed plan is coming with the support of the Leadership Council (elected deacons, and pastors) as well Cedar Park's leadership.

With the support of the congregation, we will apply ourselves to this work in the coming weeks, using this plan and timeline as our guide.

Your input is valued and your questions are welcomed.

Pleasant Bay CHURCH