



NEW WESTMINSTER
CHRISTIAN REFORMED
CHURCH

Saturday, March 11, 2017

A Letter from Pastor Andrew: Thanks, Encouragement, and a New Initiative

Dear New West Congregation,

Almost 7½ years have gone by since my family moved to Burnaby to begin serving New West Church as your pastor and I continue to thank the Lord for the blessing it has been.

I feel grateful and privileged to serve with a leadership team of elders, deacons, and staff that experiences strong unity, a deep love for Christ, and a sincere desire to faithfully proclaim the Gospel. I pray that as a congregation we will continue to praise God for these gifts and pray for the Holy Spirit's strength and protection so that these gifts are sustained. Having recently gone through a significant transition within our pastoral staff team, I am so pleased to be serving as the "white guy" with pastors Jun and Ricky, our student pastor YoonJoo, our office staff, Jenny and Fera, and our custodian, Sarwo. The Lord has blessed us with good harmony, shared vision, and a genuine love for our congregation which I hope you all feel.

Not only have we experienced transition in our staff, we are also experiencing it within our congregation. During the last 18 months we have said goodbye to a number of families as they have moved to new locations or new congregations closer to their homes or new occupations. But during this time the Lord has allowed us to welcome many new families to our worship services and to other ministries of our church. At our recent church-wide potluck, we met many guests and had a strong sense of God opening opportunities to connect with new families and individuals from our local community. Clearly, the Lord has a calling for us as a church to *tangibly display the renewing power of Jesus Christ* to our neighborhood!

During the past year we have been blessed with a number of encouraging ministry opportunities. The Beehive Preschool has seen full registration with children from our neighboring community and approximately 30% of the Beehive families do not profess Christianity or are not affiliated with a particular church. Several of the Beehive moms have been attending a weekly Women's fellowship on Thursdays, almost all of whom are new to the Christian faith. Each Tuesday approximately 25-40 people from our neighborhood attend ESL, each from a variety of cultural backgrounds. In our recent New Members class 10 people attended representing 5 countries; most of whom will be joining our church as professing members. The Lord continues to bless MOSAIC Home and the MOSAIC ministry. Recently, more than 50 international students gathered at our church to celebrate the Lunar New Year. And New Hope NWCRC looks forward to expanding our sponsorship to a daughter of the Shebats and her family.

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Together we can see that the Holy Spirit is at work in our community and our church! And we give all praise and thanks to our Lord Jesus for these blessings!

During the past 1 ½ years the topic of pastoral leadership for New West Church in the future has been shared with the congregation during several evening services and congregational meetings and with the leadership body (Council, Elders and Deacons). As the Lord has been opening up new opportunities for us to minister to our neighborhood we have sensed the need to respond to God's work by strengthening our pastoral staff team to more intentionally focus on discipleship and on supporting the needs of a growing multicultural identity.

I am pleased to share that after much discussion, discernment and prayer, Council has decided to create a new position, *Pastor of Discipleship and Multicultural Ministry*. This position includes the half-time role of *Coordinator of MOSAIC* and additional half-time responsibilities in the areas of congregational discipleship, leadership focus on our growing multicultural identity, as well as occasional preaching/teaching and leading worship. I am equally pleased that, beginning March 15, Pastor Jun will be taking on this new position! Please join me in affirming and congratulating him!

Pastor Jun, Lin and Tiger have felt warmly welcomed into the New West family and we are so grateful for the gifts they bring to our church. Pray for them and for the blessing of the Holy Spirit on Jun and his expanded responsibilities in our church.

And join with me in continuing to pray that our congregation will faithfully reflect the multicultural and multiracial identity of the Church of Christ that is found in Revelation 7:

“After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands.” (Revelation 7:9)

Together as a community of faith may we continue striving to *tangibly display God's renewing power in Christ Jesus to bring unity and healing to all dimensions of human life.*

Grace and peace to all,
Pastor Andrew

