

Dear Hope Chapel,

As we begin this New Year together I want to reflect a little on the past three months and express what I believe is to be our focus in 2012.

Transition

Since my first official Sunday on September 18, I have been afforded God's wisdom as I have navigated through where this church has been, and discerned where we are now to go. I have been overwhelmed by your kindness and how you have made me and my family feel so welcomed. It has allowed me time to prayerfully process God's vision for our church in this new season.

This season will be a time of harvesting the seeds planted deep in rich soil by our founding Pastor Bill Gross, but also a season of planting new seed, in new soil.

Finances

As with most pastoral transitions, there was a decline in our giving while people adjusted to one great pastor leaving, and an unknown pastor arriving. Because of that decline, through the wise advice of our council, I had to make several lay offs from our staff so that we could stop depleting our reserves and not risk any more critical layoffs that could further impact the way we function as a church. Please ask God to provide wisdom and direction for those we had to release: Monica Nichols over First Touch Ministries, JoAnn Jones our Financial Manager and Charles Balan our Missions Director. These valued staff members will be missed as they did their jobs with integrity and excellence. With that said, I am happy to report that our giving has maintained a steady increase, and I believe that we will continue to see God's favor in our finances.

Looking Forward: *A Call to Prayer and Fasting*

To ensure that we continue the great spiritual momentum we have begun, I am calling us as a church to seek the Lord through prayer and fasting for 30 days (January 8-February 5). I am asking you to pick one day where you substitute breakfast and lunch with a time of praying for our church, breaking the fast later in the day with dinner. Please pray for the following:

- For the vision God has given me to be understood and received by our church as it is conveyed January 8-February 5.
- For God to direct individuals to their place of service.
- For God to empower and equip us as a church to do outreach into our community.

For details about this fast, please go to www.hopenc.org

Looking Forward: *Our Vision*

In short, our vision is this: ***Pursuing and presenting Jesus in word, action and power.*** Let me break down what that means for this season of our church:

Pursue Jesus on Sunday Mornings:

I believe our number one priority in our multi-generational worship service is to pursue Jesus together in word, action and power. Sunday mornings is targeted to believers who are ready to be equipped and empowered by the word of God, excited to worship God through song and in spirit and also available to be a conduit or recipient of the Spirit's power through our prayer ministry. The ministry of the gifts of the Spirit in love and in order is welcomed here at our church.

Present Jesus Generally and Specifically:

I believe that we will continue to live in such a way that we will also present Jesus in word, action and in power. In general, because of our passionate pursuit of Jesus, we should expect to see our desire and ability to present Jesus to our family, neighbors and coworkers, increase. In addition, we will specifically make more efforts as a church to present Jesus to targeted neighborhoods in Apex and in Cary. The goal is to build long standing relationships with surrounding communities so that we can not only present Jesus in word, but also through loving acts of service and through the power of His Spirit in prayer.

Looking Forward: *Top 10 Priorities in 2012*

I have had so many incredibly productive meetings with leaders and volunteers throughout this church over the past few months that have yielded great results. I realize that many of you have not been privy to those conversations, so I want to tell you what I consider to be our God-given priorities in 2012:

- 1. Continuing Existing Ministries With Excellence:** I will work with our staff and our volunteer leadership to ensure that we have the systems and resources to support all existing ministries at our church.
- 2. Equipping and Celebrating Our Volunteers:** Throughout the year, we will offer leadership rallies where we will celebrate those of you faithfully serving. In addition, we will have training that will enhance your skills and increase your confidence.
- 3. Hispanic Worship Service,** led by Pastors Mikell and Aida Castex, will continue on Sundays from 1:30-3:30 in HopeZone. Through this ministry, we desire to see many families in the Hispanic community come to Christ.
- 4. GroupLink,** is the way we will connect people to a small group this year. Using large group teaching and small group discussion, this structured environment will help people find a small group with people in a similar life stage.

Upon completing 5 weeks of meetings, the small group will be launched off campus into someone's home.

5. ALPHA, a ministry for anyone who has questions about Christianity, will be launched after Easter, and we are expecting many to come to Christ.

6. Prayer Ministry: Now offering five teams on which you can serve, will continue to expand this ministry to be the foundation for how our church will advance the kingdom of God.

7. Twenty-Somethings Ministry (18-28): We will begin with an interactive small group bible study in someone's home for connection and growth. But in time, we will build an army of young adults who are serving and leading in all aspects of our church. Contact Darrell for more details: Darrell_Hagans@yahoo.com

8. Membership Class: Through an interactive small group discussion format over the course of three Sundays, we will take participants through our core beliefs, present opportunities for service and allow for membership sign up. A new three-week class cycle will begin the first of each Sunday beginning in February.

9. Care Ministry: This year we will begin recruiting and equipping leaders for ministries that can minister care and healing to those who are hurting from divorce, loss, abuse or addiction.

10. Hope Ministry Institute (HMI): Through HMI, Wednesday night will become the place for people to discover their gifting and place of service while getting equipped to lead in any capacity at our church. I believe the Lord is elevating this critical discipleship program to truly equip our members to more effectively pursue and present Jesus, advancing believers into leaders. Interested? Go to www.hopenc.org/ministries/hmi

I hope that this letter has not only informed you, but also encouraged you to see the movement of God's Spirit in this church in so many ways. I believe that 2012 will be the year that we reestablish our identity as a people and as a church. Prayerfully consider how you can be a part of this new season at Hope Chapel.

And if you haven't heard, I believe that the words of Jesus apply to us in this season: "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim **the year of the Lord's favor.**" Luke 4:18-19

Pursing & Presenting Jesus Together,

Pastor Bryan