



Westside Presbyterian Church

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Westside Grows News Letter #3 January 14, 2018

The first 3 month phase of our Westside Grows Campaign culminated for many of us in an All Church Banquet on December 3, 2017. Arranged by Linda Perriman and her team, and Kim Rogan and her team of hosts, 74 people enjoyed a delicious catered meal held at St. Andrew's Hespeler Church. The children were entertained with pizza in a separate room so that their parents could enjoy musical entertainment by Cheryl Amy and Amber Clarke (with moral support by the ailing Emma Christensen). Historical perspectives on the two founding congregations were provided by Margaret DeBrusk and Lorne Moir. The Christensen family shared their perspective on the current church and Sharon Agler provided her hopes for the shape of the future Westside. Several testimonies detailed the commitments planned by various members.

Westside's Future by Sharon Agler

Roger and I came to St. Andrews one year into our marriage and if my math is correct that means we have spent 35 years as members of this church family. I've been asked to share with you my dream for the future of Westside, and for me that dream is firmly rooted in what my family and I have already experienced here. We were warmly welcomed into this church family, we've received sound teaching here and we've been encouraged in our faith. We have had so much fun with all of you...chili cook-offs, corn roasts, hikes, square dances and talent contests. We have shared countless meals together and have developed what we trust will be lifelong friendships. We have sung songs together and offered prayers with and for one another. You have rejoiced with us in our happiness and stood with us and offered real support in trying life experiences. Together, we have worked on many projects to help those in need in our community and around the world. As I said; a solid foundation!

No too long ago, I read something the prophet Jeremiah wrote: "This is what the Lord says: Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls." I think that for all of us, Jeremiah's words are meaningful as we take our next steps into the future. We are very much standing at crossroads. When we knew that we would need to make some changes to our church building in order to make it

more functional, accessible and comfortable, we realized that of course, we would need to raise some money. And then, we began to meet with Duane, and realized that yes, we did indeed need a financial plan, but we needed a good reason to have that financial plan. We needed to renew a vision of who we are as a people, and in the light of that, discover how we can be the light of Jesus in our community.

So we, the people of Westside, stand at the crossroads of Victoria and Osborne, on a strong foundation that has been laid for us. We do not know exactly what the future holds for us, but we look ahead with great expectancy because of the sure and certain hope that lies within us. We glean wisdom from our heritage and learn to travel in new and innovative ways as we continue our journey. And as we look to the future, I dream that we will be sensitive to the moving of God's Spirit among us... That we will continue to grow in grace... That we will worship in a way that glorifies God... That we will be filled with love for one another... That we will not be content to simply survive as a church, sitting in our comfortable pew, but that we will long to grow, flourish and reach out... And that we will gladly and gratefully make the personal sacrifices that are needed because we are committed to leaving a strong and vibrant legacy to all of those who will come after us...not only those we know and love, but also those we haven't even met yet. I pray and dream that Westside will be that "City on a hill," that our light will so shine that others cannot help but be drawn to it.

Westside Grows Campaign Continues by Doug Kelly

As we move forward from the last 3 months of kicking off our capital campaign, to the next 3 years of bringing it to fruition, I reflect on the change that has occurred in our church family and myself. It is not often in life we get an opportunity take a chance and try to make a difference in our future, to pull together with a vision to grow rather than just try to survive. Even without the financial component, I see all the aspects of our campaign startup as being incredibly exciting and successful for us. Imagine the idea of reaching out to visit all our people, listen to our needs and concerns, then gather to do a marathon of prayer to focus on these and finally, to get together for a banquet, where everyone was invited to celebrate our decision to take on this huge undertaking. So with **Jennifer Bowman as the Follow up Director** we will see much more from her than me as she coordinates updates and continued campaign events. The immediate priority is to engage a higher number of our people to contribute, as we are now just above 30% participation.

I want to thank all those who have made their commitment to our campaign already and encourage all those still considering what they can do to reach out if there are any questions or concerns so we can go forward together. Irrespective of individual financial capabilities, demonstrating solid support for our vision for the future will be key to our success.

Andrew McCormick-Johnson's Poem - Our Church is a Home

A church is much more than a building, that houses a congregation,
It's a place we look forward to visiting with great anticipation.
For anyone who visits can very quickly see,
We view our congregation like a second family.
We pray for each other's well-being should misfortune come our way,
And help our friends to make it through, till the dawn of a brighter day.
There's love and kind compassion in abundance to be found,
If ever we feel the trials of life have threatened to bring us down.
We share each other's blessings and freely spread our joy,
And no one hesitates their generosity to employ.
And anyone who visits us will quickly understand,
They always will be greeted with a friendly open hand.
We share each other's laughter, and it always brings delight,
When a friendly social gathering is held some weekend night.
To all in search of comfort, and to all compelled to roam,
We have made this place to ever be our loving second home.