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# The Grace of God in Facility Expansion

## 2 Corinthians 9:6-15

**Introduction** We are gathered this morning to consider the grace of God in our facility expansion. We occasionally step aside from our exposition of texts to think through our ministry, our needs and challenges. It is our privilege this morning to consider what God has wrought for us and what we need to do in response.

Last summer we committed ourselves to growth and expansion. Shaped by 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3; 2 Thessalonians 1:3; James 1:5-8; Hebrews 13:7 the Elders have made and reaffirm THESE FAITH COMMITMENTS, calling on you to join with us in them.

We will believe God so much that we will work hard to bring forth what we desire from Him.

We will grow in faith so much that we will increase our loving labor for people in our ministries and through our facilities.

We will ask God in faith for wisdom knowing He will give it to us.

We will model that faith for your example and encouragement.

Listen then to God's Word from 2 Corinthians 9. <Read Text>

### For our Course

How we have seen God's favor and enabling power over the last year.

#### Our Planning in the Past

In 1999, we began to consider a path of growth for the Chapel. We thought through our ministries and tried to anticipate what growth would mean. In 2002, we began to experience some of the pinch in our current facility. As a result, we spent some time thinking about facility expansion, considering some concepts and designs.

In the spring of 2004, the Elders went on a retreat at which we prayed, pondered and planned for facility expansion. We developed a Mission, Vision and Purpose Statement along with some initial objectives and requirements. We set out an initial timeline for a two month campaign to preach on Facility Expansion in August and Ministry Growth in September.

## Our Launch in August

In August last year, we unpacked in three sermons, our vision for facility expansion.

First, we presented 2 concepts for facility expansion. These had been recommended by our builder as two possibilities. One concept focused on adding classrooms and remodeling for auditorium. The second concept focused on adding auditorium and remodeling for classrooms. There was agreement that the second concept made much more sense.

Next, we presented the challenge for our finances. We showed what we would need to do to either fund the expansion up-front or to meet mortgage payments. We affirmed that we believed that borrowing the money was Biblical while we were desiring and praying to do expand with cash. We also demonstrated that saving in the present financial and building inflation environment undesirable.

Finally, we explained from Philippians 4 and 2 Corinthians 9 the principles that govern our regular, planned, proportional giving and our additional, sacrificial and covenanted or pledged giving. We asked you to pray and consider what God would have you do on a one time, on a periodic and on a regular basis.

The Elders challenged you to give through their own commitment of \$1,062 per month. 65 of you responded by covenanting over 3 years to give in a total of one time offerings, \$28,880 and through various means, a total of \$4,840.43 per month. This Capital Campaign would then raise \$203,135 over three years.

## Our Possibility in Late Fall

Then, in God's providence, in the fall, we were approached to see if we were interested in selling our property and building. From October through December, we negotiated, considered other properties and facility concepts. The final offer range was so low as to make a move financially unwise.

During those three months, we learned to wait on God and to not put our hopes in what might be. We also lost some momentum in our giving and in our communication. We did not continue to hold up our vision before you as we ought. We are praying now that as we move forward and show you what is unfolding there will be fuel for your excitement.

## Our Progress since Christmas

This year, we focused on working with our builder to develop concepts for expansion with an auditorium being the center piece. A concept was presented which was rejected because it the way it joined the two buildings and an external element we did not like. An especially productive meeting with the architect several weeks ago produced a floor plan, connecting concept and initial design that was much better. Over the last two weeks, this has now matured into a design approved by the Elders.

## For our Design

So, we are thrilled to have seen God's favor and enabling power in the design of the facility.

### Our Purposed Development

First, let's begin by reviewing our church mission and vision and applying it practically to facility and ministry expansion.

#### Mission

Our mission is to see the facilities of Clearcreek Chapel expanded through careful planning, unified partnership, principled purposes, articulated values and God-honoring stewardship.

#### Vision

Our vision is to have a facility that will provide:

- A design that is guided by our values, principles and objectives;
- A project that demonstrates the unity and diversity of our corporate community.
- A beautiful contemporary auditorium for the worship in word and music;
- A large commons for casual, informal and formal fellowship;
- A central, well equipped nursery facility to minister effectively to both parents and children;
- An expanded, useful and flexible design for educational space;
- An expanded and efficient administrative office suite

#### Values

The following selected values shape the trajectory of our expansion:

##### Values Relating to Spiritual Atmosphere

- Magnifying the worth of God in every thing that we do
- Going hard after God together as an all-satisfying goal in Himself.
- Being shaped by the Scripture as the fully sufficient and trustworthy revelation of God.
- Being humble and teachable by the Word of God so that we are constantly being stretched and sharpened in our grasp of God's Word and truth.
- Recognizing the role suffering, self-denial and self-discipline must have in refining and maturing for effective ministry.

##### Values Relating to Corporate Worship

- A public worship form that communicates the supremacy of God in all of life.
- A sustained sense of lingering worship culminating in fervent, life-related, Biblical exposition attended by the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

- Music in our worship which is both God-centered and God-ward and is an expression of the diversity of believers among us.
- Being a singing people who, by the Word and the Spirit, make a joyful noise to the Lord.
- Understanding that in singing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, we are to edify, encourage and admonish one another.

#### Values Relating to our Life Together

- Increasingly visible, authentic, practical ways of loving one another.
- Eager openness to new people and organized efforts to incorporate them in the life and ministry of the
- Being vulnerable and transparent in our imperfections so as to encourage candor and openness for change and growth.
- Strategizing and laboring to bring about spiritual formation at all ages aimed at cultivating a knowledgeable, sacrificial, serving maturity, enabling them to be salt and light at all levels of society.
- Giving attention and emphasis to bringing up children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.
- Developing youth through a discipleship that excites and equips them for mature Christian living.
- Providing Bible teaching for adults in a class setting that stimulates Bible reading, memory, and learning.
- Being engaged with other Christian leaders who sharpen, stretch, challenge and further our understanding of God and His Word.

#### Values Relating to Church Ministry

- The spiritual shepherding and leadership by elders.
- The diaconal care of our people and service-related ministries.
- The importance of Biblical Counseling for all of life, particularly the development of our Biblical Counseling Center as a place to train effective Biblical counselors, offer hope and help to sin-laden people,
- Use, with excellence, of the spiritual gifts given to all the members of the congregation in ministries of worship, discipleship, service and evangelism.
- Efficient administrative structures shaped by the Word and sustained by prayer.
- Openness and integrity in the wise use of the financial resources given by God's people.
- Full participation in the stewardship of proportional giving by every household.

#### Values Relating to Church Facilities

- The glory and greatness of God reflected in aesthetic beauty expressed through effective structures.
- Being together in a way that supports the welcome of the unchurched and the worship of believers.

- Finding the third way between extravagant plushness and bare functional practicality.
- Careful planning that makes multi-use of space, prepares for future expansion and allows for phased in development and completion.
- A design that sustains value in the market-place implying carefulness about an overly “church” exterior.

## Our Present Drawings

Here is what we have at present as a concept moving toward completion. We are very excited about what the designers have proposed. With this design and floor plan, we are now working on details that will produce finished elevation drawings and blueprints.

We are placing these before you, not for detailed study, but to show our present progress. As we present our timeline and our challenges, we want you to see what has engaged us and enthused us.



**Slide – 1 View from the South**



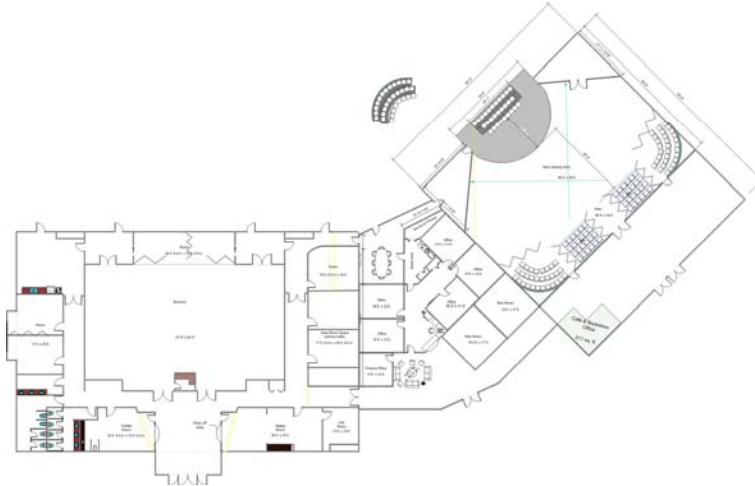
**Slide – 2 Birdseye View from the South**



**Slide – 3 Ground level from the South**



**Slide – 4 3D Floor Plan**



**Slide – 5 Preliminary Blue Print**

## Our Planned Development

Now, it is time to clarify once again how we, as an Elder governed church, work through these issues. The affected ministry teams have submitted requirements and requests. The Elders developed a Requirements Document, revised it and given it to the Builder. The Expansion Team has worked with the Builder step by step to implement the requirements. Those have been approved by the Elders. While we are open to counsel, we are not asking for detail by detail approval. These will be worked by the Expansion team, the ministries, the overseeing Elders in coordination with the Builders.

How do we plan to move forward? We see the following milestones for our planning.

### **April 20<sup>th</sup> - Wednesday Evening - Flock Discussion**

This will be an opportunity to discuss the concerns and challenges present by the Elders. Detailed drawings will NOT be available until after the May 1<sup>st</sup> presentation.

### **May 1<sup>st</sup> - Sunday Morning - Full Presentation**

If the Lord allows, we should be ready to present more detailed floor plans and elevation drawings as well as an estimate from the builder. If we are unable to have this entire presentation ready by May 1<sup>st</sup>, then we will slip the date to May 15<sup>th</sup> in the Morning Service.

### **May 8<sup>th</sup> – Wednesday Evening - Flock Discussion**

This will be an opportunity to discuss the facility as planned. This is more a time to take questions and make explanations. At this point, we will probably not be ready to give you interior decorating, colors, designs, etc.

### **May 15<sup>th</sup> – Sunday Evening – Call for Affirmation or Full Presentation AM**

We will preach, pray and ponder over our expansion and then call for an affirmation from the congregation. It possibly could be the full presentation with a call occurring two weeks later.

## For our Challenges

How we expect to see God's favor and enabling power to meet our expansion challenges.

### From the Word of God

### 2 Corinthians 9:8

Let me take a moment to highlight the principles for giving we taught last August from Philippians 4 and 2 Corinthians 8-9. I am not going to take the time to expound on them. The extended exposition will be in this manuscript and available to you on the Web.

### Partnering in Faith

### Philippians 4:14-20

As we focus on expanding by faith as it relates to finances, we are encouraged in our giving by this text. Paul is here rejoicing in the sacrificial gift sent him by the church at Philippi. He revels in its sacrificial character – what it costs them and how it ascends to God.

As we apply this to us, here are five key words that capture the underlying principles:

#### Partnership

(v.14-16)

The ministry of giving to advance the kingdom is a partnership. It is working together to supply needs. It is a way that every single person can be involved in the growing and going of the ministry.

*Your giving is a partnership in the expansion of the ministry.*

#### Product

(v.17-18a)

The ministry of giving produces two important results: it meets needs and it reaps rewards. Paul's consistent metaphor is that it is an investment in that it returns an interest. Your giving not only makes ministry expansion possible, but will bring a return in practical ways.

*Your giving is an investment that enables ministry and reaps reward.*

#### Pleasing

(v.18)

The ministry of giving is sweet smelling incense that is pleasing to God. Notice that it is not just approval, but delight. God not only accepts your offering, but relishes and enjoys it.

*Your giving is a perfume that delights God.*

#### Promise

(v.19)

The ministry of giving qualifies you to be a recipient of God's provision. Many Christians want to claim this verse while not meeting the conditions that have gone before. Their giving pleased God and God will provide for them out of His riches. One thing our giving does is loosen our hold on our riches and expresses dependence on God's

*Your giving is a qualification for God's providing promise.*

**Praise**

(v.20)

The ministry of giving brings glory to God as the source, sustainer and recipient of our sacrifice. When we give sacrificially, then glory must be given to God. The object of love becomes the object of our praise. We will extol what we believe to be excellent.

*Your giving is praise to God.*

**Equal sacrifice, not equal burden****2 Corinthians 8-9**

This brings me to the very important principle given us by Paul. He is writing encouraging – well actually, exhorting, humiliating and threatening the folks at Corinth to carry through with their promise. Here is covenanted giving – pledges or promises – to give substantially to assist the church in Jerusalem. He is now concerned that after all his bragging about their substantial promise, they are not going to carry through. He is so concerned that he is sending a delegation ahead to be sure that the promise is fulfilled.

There are lots of principles that can be drawn from these two chapters (8-9). While I will not give a detailed exposition, let me extract some principles from the flow of the text. I pray your heart is poised to receive and respond, not resist, God's Word.

**Generous giving is by grace**

(8:2-7)

Paul knows that grace is flowing in the Macedonian churches. How? In the midst of extreme affliction, joy and poverty overflow in a wealth of generosity. They gave proportionally (according to their means) and sacrificially (above their means). Grace causes them to beg (imagine that!) for the opportunity to give. Further, they gave themselves wholly to God first and then gave their money. Therefore, Paul commands (v.7) the Corinthians to excel in this act of grace as well. Their pattern becomes a precept for others. So, I say to all of us, "See to it that we excel in this act of grace as well."

*Your giving will be generous when enabled by grace.*

**Sacrificial giving proves love**

(8:8-9)

Here Paul shifts to their motivation for giving – not command but love. Sacrifice is proof of genuine love. Thus, the Lord's giving up all His riches to become poor and enriching us is brought forward as an example of love proven by sacrificial giving. While we ought to give as a matter of obedience, that obedience is to be motivated by love.

*Your giving shows the genuineness of your love.*

**Proportional giving is equitable**

(8:10-15)

Rather than explain all this, just let me summarize by the heading for this whole section. The point in giving is not equal burden, but rather equal sacrifice. So, we will not ask every family to give an extra \$10 or \$100 a month. Rather, each family see what percent they can sacrificially give. Then, calculate the dollar amount



and commit to it. We would love to see every family increase their giving by 1% to 5%. This will mean some will be able to give an additional \$25 a month, others \$1,000 and a few will choose to give up much and do even more.

*Your giving is equal sacrifice, but not equal burden.*

**Offerings must be handled honorably (8:16-24)**

Briefly, Paul here demonstrates the absolute necessity of handling money honestly. How sad when God's people give sacrificially only to have it wasted in sloppy handling or dishonest misuse or extravagant waste. We must be honest, accountable and frugal with what you sacrificially give.

*Your giving will be handled honorably.*

**Covenant giving (pledges) are Biblical (9:1-5)**

It is obvious that the church has pledged or promised an amount to give and that Paul expects them to meet their pledge, as God provides. While we decry the ungodly methods used by many religious groups and churches, we also will be faithful to the Bible. The misuse of a Biblical strategy should not cause us to abandon it, but to be Biblical in our use of it.

*Your giving may be pledged and fulfilled.*

**Generous giving relies on God's provision (9:6-10)**

Here is God's principle and promise – He is the source and supply of all that you promise to give. We are not talking about so-called “faith promise giving.” We are talking about trusting and believing in a gracious, all-supplying God who desires to show Himself powerful on behalf of His people. He supplies so that the harvest of your righteousness is great.

*Your giving will rely on God's supplying.*

**Sacrificial giving produces gratitude (9:11-15)**

When God supplies and Christians give faithfully and sacrificially, what gratitude and thanksgiving are felt! There is an ever-spreading of that witness to God's grace and enabling supply that spreads widely. It is not an admiration of the people giving, but an awe of the surpassing grace.

*Your giving will overflow with thanksgiving.*

You will be enriched in every way for all your generosity, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God. <sup>12</sup> For the ministry of this service is not only supplying the needs of the saints, but is also overflowing in many thanksgivings to God. 2 Cor. 9:11-12 [ESV]



Now, many of you are not participating in the Covenant Giving for Facility Expansion, either because you were unable to at the time or because you have come into our church family since August. If you are not currently participating or would like to raise your commitment, if you will slip your hand up, the ushers will place a card in your hand. If you need assistance filling this out, see any of the elders or Tom Wiggershaus.

## In our Finances

So we believe and teach that all Christians should be giving in a planned, purposed, proportional, periodic way that is generous, glad and an expression of gratitude. In view of this, in August the Elders presented our Budget for this year. We highlighted the following key elements in that budget:

That we raised the regular operating budget by a minimal percent over the prior year;

That we would budget to receive and to set aside each month the amount you covenanted to give for the building, thus demonstrating an ability to pay a mortgage and set aside a significant sum to occupy the facility we would build;

That the total increase over the prior year giving was still only 15% including the Facility Expansion set aside.

We as a church agreed together to give to support this Budget. As you can see from our Bulletin, we are at present around \$23,297 behind in our giving to date. While this follows the last 5 year trends with the exception of last year, we are concerned as we consider moving forward.

## For our Faith

So we have a challenge to face together. This is a challenge to our faith and our obedience. Do we believe that God's favor and power provides all that is necessary so that we will have all we need to do every good work? Do we believe that God has given us, as a congregation, what we need to meet our budget in our giving? Do we sow much so that we will reap much? Are we a people whose professed gratitude to God for all He has done for us translates into real sacrificial giving?

We know that God has provided for us to do what we have determined to do. It is our prayer and hope that each of you will carefully consider what sacrificial effort you will make. We are not just talking about extra money. We are talking about some measure of giving up something. I know for many it may be a relatively small amount. But I also know that many of you are able to do much.

## Conclusion

So, we come both trembling and trusting. We are trembling over our own inadequacies and the challenge before us. We are trusting a sovereign and mighty God whose blessing, wisdom and provision we seek.

We also come with this vision for the future and this challenge for the present. We need God's grace. We believe by faith in what God has said that He will grant that grace. So, we anticipate God's favor as we move forward. We also anticipate God's enablement in each of you and all of us.