

## 5 Year Anniversary – Cause for Celebration – 11/15/09

Happy 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary HBC – this is a special time in the life of our church

God has done an extraordinary work, in a short amount of time, and we have much cause for celebration – what a privilege to be a part of it

So I want to spend our time together doing exactly that – celebrating our church, and rejoicing in all that God has done

And as I was reflecting on that the past 5 years, the first cause for celebration that came to mind, is . . .

### **Our Existence (Mt 16:18)**

I don't think I realized 5 years ago how difficult and tenuous church planting really is  
It's not a sure thing just b/c you mix together the right ingredients and roll it out like bread dough

What *is* a sure thing, is that Jesus said in **Mt 16:18** – *I will build my church*

That's why we exist; Not b/c we're good cooks . . .

But b/c he chose, in his sovereignty, to establish a part of his church right here, right now – for such a time as this

And if that was it, that would be cause enough for celebration\*\*\*\*\*

- But on top of that, he's also chosen to pour out his blessing on us *far* beyond the norm  
Church plants don't happen like this

There was a 5 year study done recently that tracked over 2000 church plants cross 13 denominations . . .

And they found that the typical church plant, at the end of 4 years, has an average attendance of 85

And that's *if* they still exist at all, which 1/3 of them don't by that time

That's not to diminish *them*, but to point out that *we* have much cause to celebrate our existence

B/c unlike most, God has not only *established* our church, but has *blessed* us immensely

- We grew from 2 in the Fall of '03 with Becky and I praying and preparing . . .  
To a *few* in May of '04 with John and Angie Walters . . .  
To 8 at our first PwtP's in July, at the Steinbronn's home . . .  
And then 20 at our first Launch Team meeting in September, at the Millage's

And that Launch Team of 20, grew to 50 over the next 2 months

50 people who were compelled, committed, and contagious

Compelled by God to be a part of this church

Committed to do whatever it took to make it happen

And contagious in that they wouldn't and *couldn't* be quiet about what was happening

The result of which was 463 people showing up on our first Sunday

That's cause for celebration; Our church was born

In fact, if you were a part of that **Launch Team** in those early days, before we went public, would you stand?

I just want to recognize you for your commitment and role in all this

From passing out invitations, to cleaning toilets – you're looking at people who were compelled, committed, and contagious, and still are

It's the kind of person we were looking for *then*, and it's the kind of person we're looking for *now*

God bless you for following his call (be seated)\*\*\*\*\*

- Looking back now, I'm not even sure how it all happened

Except to say – God honored his word to build his church, we took the risks to be obedient, and here we are . . .

Celebrating our *existence* 5 years later

Second, and closely associated with that, is . . .

### **Our Growth (Col 2:19)**

**Col 2:19** – [It's from Christ that] *the whole body, nourished and knit together through its joints and ligaments, grows with a growth that is from God.*

Certainly our growth has been from God\*\*\*\*\*

- After our kick-off, our lowest Sunday was 284 around the holidays that year . . .

And from there, we never looked back

So that today we're averaging ~1900 on a weekend, having pushed just over 2k last wk

And while it's not all about the numbers, I *do* want to influence as many people as I possibly can – b/c heaven awaits, and hell is real

So it's not just numbers for numbers sake, it's numbers for *God's* sake, and *their* sake

- We've also seen some pretty amazing *financial* growth

Without which, we couldn't sustain the ministry necessary to meet the *numeric* growth  
But we can, b/c you've been faithful to tithe – obedient to God, and sacrificial in your personal life, for the sake of our church's life

I remember 5 years ago, wondering how we were ever going to come up with the \$65k necessary to buy sound equipment – but we did

And I've wondered every year since how we were going to meet budget – but we have

Which makes me hopeful that we'll do the same this year, and the next, and the next

B/c we've grown in our giving

- And then there's our *spiritual* growth – which gives me more joy than the other 2 combined

I absolutely love the growth in maturity I see in you

I love to hear that you're walking in the truth, and making decisions that honor God

I love the increasing desire I sense in you for kingdom things

And I love your growing passion for the Lord Jesus Christ

In so many ways, our growth is cause for celebration

### **Our Impact (Acts 12:24)**

And this is probably our biggest reason to celebrate

But it's not measured in numbers or money, it's measured in *people* – changed lives  
Which is what **Acts 12:24** is talking about when it says – *The word of God increased and multiplied*

That is, more/more people *heard* it; *And*, it had an increasing effect on those who did

The cool thing is – what happened then, is happening now\*\*\*\*\*

People are hearing the gospel and getting saved around here – almost daily

And they're getting baptized to show it

And others are *recommitting* their lives to the Lord

It's as close to the book of Acts as I've ever experienced

- In fact, I'd like for you to do something

If you were **saved** here at Harvest, sometime in the last 5 years – would you stand?

How about those of you who have been **baptized** here?

And finally, those of you who have **recommitted** your life to Christ since coming here

That's cause for celebration (be seated)\*\*\*\*\*

I don't know the numbers of those who have made first-time commitments or

recommitments – but we've baptized 380 people since opening our doors

And that doesn't include the impact through our global partners like the Buser's in

PNG, or the Lasavath's in Southeast Asia

God is using our church to make an impact all over the world, starting with *changed lives* right here

And to capture that, we've put together a video that I trust will bless you, and hopefully bring back some memories for some of you

It's 8 min *long*, and worth every second; So settle in and take a look (**video**)

That's cause for celebration, don't you think?

### **Our Leadership (Eph 4:11-12)**

**Eph 4:11-12** – *And he [Christ] gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.*

God has appointed in the church, and in *our* church – pastors and teachers, not to *do* all the ministry, but to equip *you* to do it

Not to do all the discipling/shepherding *themselves*, but teach/encourage *you* to do so

And while our **staff** does a great job, it's likely you don't know all of them – especially those who are behind the scenes

So I want to take a few minutes to recognize them, and thank God for them

B/c they're definitely cause for celebration

CM – **John Walters** (Angie); **Delaine Lanman** (CM Coordinator)

JH – **Mike DuBard** (Jamy); HS – **Garth Glenn** (Deanna) . . . **Liz Dirksen**

YA – **Dan Buraga** (Jamy); AM – **David Olson** (Paula) . . . **Anna Isley** (Rob)

Facilities Manager – **Bill Oberhaus** (Nancy)

WM – **Evie Gardner** (Jerry) . . . **Ann Worthington** (Tony)

GO – **Dave Merrifield** (Judy) . . . **Alicia Nielsen**

Local Outreach – **Doug Rowland** (Kristin)

Worship – **Nathan Begnaud** (Emily); **Evan Deuth** (Worship Coordinator)

**Lisa Koster** (Ryan)

AP – **John Cochran** (Jamy) . . . **Cassie Pham**

EP – **Bob Brueggen** (Dottie); **Meri Vickery** (Financial Administrator)

**Christina Wallace** – w/out whom, couldn't do ½ of what we do; true of all our AA's

### **Becky (photo)**

I couldn't imagine doing this without this woman; She is an amazing blessing to me

I love the memories we share; And I love you

And let me just say to all of you as a **staff** . . .

God bless u for your servant hearts, your diligence in ministry, & your love for the Lord

I love serving with you, and I'm so proud of you (be seated)

- Another significant part of our leadership that we can celebrate, is our **elder** board

In addition to myself (**photos**), there's – Dan Millage (chair), Darrell Henricksen

(Deacon Chair), John Cochran, and Bob Brueggen

We're also in process with another elder, and hope to bring him to your attention in the near future

I just want you to know how blessed we are to be led by this group of men

They're humble, discerning, supportive, committed men of God

Men who love the Lord, love this church, and pray without ceasing for it

- Third, is our **deacon** board

At Harvest, our elders are responsible for big picture things like doctrine, discipline, and direction . . .

While the deacons are more hands-on – responsible for finances, facilities, benevolence

They include (**photos**) – Doug Carroll, Jerry Gardner, David Olson, Bryan Sampson,

Andy Scholl, and Mark Strawser . . .

And similar to the elders, we also have one more deacon in process\*\*\*\*\*

That's our leadership – Staff, Elders, and Deacons

Once again, cause for celebration b/c we are blessed with an amazing group of people

### **Our Building (1 Chron 29:16-17)**

**1 Chron 29:16-17** captures my heart as good as any re this place

That's where David is praying just after the offerings were collected to build the temple

And he says – *O Lord our God, all this abundance that we have provided for building*

*you a house for your holy name comes from your hand and is all your own . . . and*

*now I have seen your people, who are present here, offering freely and joyously to*

*you.*\*\*\*\*\*

We weren't even a year old when this place became available . . .

And after negotiating a sale price of \$4.7m, we signed on the dotted line

Keep in mind – we didn't have any financing (it all happened so fast), we didn't have any drawings, we didn't have any history . . .

We didn't have anything except 150k of earnest money, our signatures, and the *conviction* that this was not only a great location, but the place God wanted us

And I remember announcing it to you the very next Sunday, which was the end of 3 months of prayer and fasting together as a church . . .

Saying we're going to need a lot of money, and fast, to make it happen

And you guys responded with a standing ovation

6 weeks later was Giving Sunday – a *one* shot deal to raise \$1.3m

If we couldn't raise enough money to secure the financing and get our foot in the door,  
and do it now – the whole deal was a moot point

So a little less than 18 months into our church, with 625 people coming, including kids . . .

We raised \$1.6m, in cash; And then another 300k later that year

The result of which, is a building that is now used in some way, shape, or form for  
ministry and worship – 7 days a wk

Our building is cause for celebration (**summary**)

- All of which makes our future about as bright as it can be  
And I trust stokes your fire to be a part of it

B/c I'm convinced that our best days are not in the past, but in the future

That God has only *begun* to show his greatness and mighty hand (Deut 3:24)

### Pray

*Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your name give glory* (Ps 115:1)

*There is none like you among the gods, O Lord, nor are there any works like yours. For*

*you are great and do wondrous things; you alone are God.* (Ps 86:8, 10)

*Therefore, we will be glad and exult before you, jubilant with joy.* (Ps 68:3)

We have much cause for celebration, so let's stand, lift up our voices, and do so in  
worship (Forever)