

Summary Report from Transition Team
February 2017

In April of 2016 a Transition Team was named for the purpose of "identifying the factors unique to Cedar Springs in preparation for a Pastoral Search Committee." For the past nine months our team has met consistently in both large group and sub-groups. Our experience has been rich and positive, with a wide variety of both men and women of different perspectives and generations. Ultimately we have been defined and united by our kindred spirit in Christ and our deep love for CSPC. We treasure our church, and we are grateful to call Cedar Springs our home.

A word about the Transition Team's process...after our first meeting in May, we committed the summer months to informally surveying approximately 300 Cedar Springs members, in one-on-one and small group conversations. These conversations revolved around seven questions about the life and health of our church (see attached). In September we identified the five primary themes which surfaced from these conversations. From October-January we "drilled down" on these themes to more clearly understand and detail them, and then offered potential action points for the Session to consider.

The paragraphs below represent a summary report of the five primary themes along with our corresponding recommendations to the Search Team. Our hope in this document is not to provide a detailed account of the Transition Team's work, but rather to provide simple and clear themes and recommendations. We hope this document will give added "voice" from the congregation, and offer helpful direction, insight, and key potential profiles to the Search Team as they begin to pray and pursue our next Senior Pastor.

**Five Themes from the congregation with corresponding recommendations
from the Transition Team:**

I. We desire Cedar Springs to have a clear sense of identity and direction -
a sense of who we have been in the past, who we are today, and who we want to
be in the future.

A. Our time-honored strengths and most deeply held values include:

- A strong tradition of Biblical preaching and teaching. There is
overwhelming gratitude for John Wood's preaching ministry.
- A Missions focus, both local and global
- A rich, heartfelt and thought-full Sunday experience of worship
- A Gospel community of Christ...the people/the relationships/the gospel

B. Our growth opportunities and challenges include:

- Growing a deeper sense of connection, intimacy, and involvement
beyond just Sunday morning
- Creating a common understanding of the vision and direction of the
church as a whole which is understood and embodied by the staff and
officers and clearly communicated to the congregation
- Building a greater sense of unity and team within the church leadership,
both within the staff, and also the officers
- Expanding our discipleship, shepherding, and mentoring ministries
- Growing our ministries with young people, from elementary through
college age

II. We desire to have folks find deeper connections here at Cedar Springs.

As God has blessed our church with growth in numbers over the years, there
seems to be an accompanying lack of intimacy, deep connections, and
involvement beyond Sunday morning. We imagine a group of men and women
who live life together. We want to be a welcoming and inclusive people, a praying
people, and a multi-generational family where people are known, respected and

loved in our midst. We want to love and care for those who are both easy and difficult, in good times and hard.

III. We desire our members to feel informed by, and connected to, the leadership of the church; and we desire for our leaders to be unified together.

There has been concern expressed that the congregation does not always feel informed by or connected to the Senior Leadership. There is a parallel concern that the CSPC staff is not always inter-connected as a team, operating instead as separate silos, independent ministry entrepreneurs, respectfully doing their jobs.

IV. We desire there to be many opportunities for our members to be shepherded, disciplined, and mentored. One of the unique blessings of CSPC is that we are an inviting church that regularly receives numerous first-time visitors to our worship services. However, too often we seem to lose members at the "front door" of their CSPC experience. We want to be better stewards of our people and do a better job of channeling them into shepherding relationships and discipleship training, so that they, in turn, might grow in their confidence and gladness to share Christ and disciple others

V. We desire for our people to use their spiritual gifts in serving the Lord at Cedar Springs.

The church is full of many talented and gifted folks, many of whom freely share those gifts both in the city of Knoxville and around the world. At the same time, there is a perception that a large number of CSPC members are not actively engaged in serving one another within the congregation. There may be a variety of reasons for this (e.g we have relied on too few for too long; members are serving outside the church; or it is easier to "hire out" service opportunities). However, we believe that Christ calls every member of His church to follow his

example..."I did not come to be served, but to serve."

We freely acknowledge that no one person short of Jesus Himself could perfectly fulfill all of the desires we have, but want to clearly portray the opportunities awaiting the man the Lord has called next.

THEREFORE we desire a Senior Pastor who has a clear appreciation for our identity, embraces our strengths, and will lead us forward in our growth opportunities by leading the leadership of the church in:

- 1- Having a vision to help and lead us in becoming a more deeply connected church; A person who values the local Body of Christ as vibrant and alive, internally connected as well as externally motivated.
- 2- Valuing clear communication and modeling transparency and trust; A person who is not only a gifted preacher/teacher but also possesses a pastoral style in relating with people and who encourages a sense of unity and family within the staff and also with the officers
- 3- Bringing new energy and vision to how we might better engage and help our members grow in Christ through life giving relationship and discipleship training opportunities; A person who desires to see the church trained up as followers of Christ.
- 4- Supporting and encouraging a vision to expand and convey creative opportunities to serve the congregation within the church; A person who will help articulate a theological basis for inspiring our members to love, serve, and share Christ with others.

In closing, the Transition Team recognizes that at best, this document is a sincere human document written by flawed human hands, and so we gladly and gratefully acknowledge, "The mind of a man plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps." (Proverbs 16:9).

May it be so with us.

Appendix A- Questions asked by Transition Team to members of CSPC.

To get input from folks that you are connected to at the church, specifically around the following questions:

- 1- What are the things that you appreciate most about Cedar Springs?
- 2- What first drew you into Cedar Springs and what has kept you around?
- 3- What parts of Cedar Springs are the most difficult for you? Why?
- 4- What are some ways that you think Cedar Springs could improve in caring for the congregation?
- 5- What do you think are the 3-4 most important things for Cedar Springs as communicated either directly or indirectly?
- 6- If you could change anything about Cedar Springs, what would you change and why?
- 7- What questions should we be asking but aren't?

APPENDIX B- What we heard—The Raw Data

As far as I can discern from y'all we heard from about 300 or so folks. There was (as you would expect) a large variance of thoughts about the church with such open-ended questions. In order to have a meaningful gauge, we will use the most frequent answer as our baseline to determine the frequency of the other answers (Because biblical preaching and teaching was by far the most mentioned things it will serve as our 100%).

Positives

- 1- Biblical Preaching/Teaching- 100
- 2- John Wood- 57
- 3- Missions Focus/Global Worldview- 50
- 4- Local Missions/Church on Mission- 41
- 5- Worship/Sunday Experience- 26
- 6- People/Relationships/Gospel Community-21

Opportunities

- 1- Hard to get connected and involved- 76
- 2- Lack of Discipleship/Small Groups/Christian Ed- 46
- 3- No connection with pastors/staff- 45
- 4- Elementary Ministry/TEAM Kids- 40
- 5- Size of church/Lack of intimacy- 39
- 6- Officers out of touch/Not connecting/ shepherding- 35
- 7- Lack of Leadership/Vision/Direction- 34
- 8- Not welcoming/Cliqueish/Wealth- 32
- 9- Lack of Shepherding/Mentoring- 29
- 10-College/Young Adult Ministry- 21
- 11- Communication- 20
 - Student Ministry- 20
- 12-Lack of leadership diversity- 17
- 13-Lack of transparency from leadership- 16
 - Staff Dysfunction/Lack of accountability- 16
 - Age and Stage Segregation- 16
 - Lack of diversity- 16
- 14- Lack of people serving- 15