

Dear Bridgeway Family,

I am so incredibly grateful for you and your ever-increasing desire to know and serve the Lord. The Apostle Paul had these same kinds of feelings for his friends in the church of Philippi.

"I thank my God every time I remember you. 4) In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy 5) because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, 6) being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus." Philipians 1:3-6



As I am writing this letter, I am sitting in my office looking at four pro jerseys that I have framed on my walls. They include the Dallas Cowboys, Texas Rangers, Dallas Mavericks, and the Dallas Stars. One interesting aspect each of the jerseys share is that they come from the 1970s or 1980s. Sometimes when I'm in my office, I will look at the jerseys, and numerous memories of my childhood in Dallas come rushing back to my mind. I truly loved my childhood growing up in Dallas, cheering these teams live in person or watching them on TV from home.

As enjoyable as those days were, my days and experiences in Tampa have been second to none – and not due to the Buccaneers, Rays, or Lightning. Tampa has far surpassed Dallas for me based upon what I have been privileged to participate in at Bridgeway over the last 17+ years. We traversed 11 years of setup and teardown in a middle school and a YMCA, and have now resided in our current facility for a little more than six years. Throughout this time, we have seen hundreds of families gather and connect to worship, grow, learn and serve. We have seen people of all ages choose to follow and place their faith and trust in Jesus through first time decisions and baptisms. The reach of Bridgeway has grown from just a small church of a dozen or so folks, to a large community that has been involved with outreach locally (women's shelter, kids clubs, pregnancy centers, food distribution, homeless outreaches, prison ministry support), outreach within other states (Hurricane Katrina, Hurricane Sandy, floods in Pennsylvania, tornados in Oklahoma, Hurricane Harvey, Sox Place in Denver, and others), and impact beyond our nation (Honduras, Guatemala, India, Africa, Haiti, Philippines, Nepal, England, Israel, Gaza).

As I look back on my life, I see my first 28 years in Dallas similar to an Act One of a performance, and my 18 years in Tampa as Act Two. And while I'm eternally grateful for my "Act One," it is the "Act Two" that is far more exciting and fulfilling as I aspire to serve the Lord with my life.

I truly believe this example of Act One and Act Two is also a picture of Bridgeway. Up until this point for Bridgeway it has been ACT ONE. And WOW, it has been an incredible show thus far! But now, it is time for all of us to come together for **ACT TWO**.

Over the next several years, we are going to witness our community rapidly expand through numerous business and neighborhood initiatives that are projected to grow Wesley Chapel unlike anything of recent development.

- Metro Development Group is partnering to bring expansion to the Connected City Corridor (Wesley Chapel up to San Antonio) through hospitals, development of a wellness district, new restaurants, retail, and an expanding list of businesses throughout the more than 7,800 acres of undeveloped land in Wesley Chapel and east Pasco.
- There are several county-approved plans currently in motion for land parcels to be dedicated to the construction of new neighborhoods, parks and trails.

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- One long-range 50-year projection shows an increase of approximately 37,000 new homes to this future development.

With this coming expansion it is essential that we be ready to properly handle the increase and growth. It is my hope that Bridgeway will be a place of connection, ministry and spiritual growth for many of the residents that will be coming into the area within the next several years.

Therefore, it is our intention to enter **ACT TWO** of our building by expanding the current auditorium, reconfiguring the current offices into a large classroom and gathering space, and to begin clearing more of our undeveloped 14-acres for future activities and gatherings.

Some of the benefits of this expansion will be:

- **Enlarging the Auditorium** – For our holiday services (Christmas and Easter) we host four packed services to accommodate everyone. We have seen attendance ranging from 1,300 up to 1,800 this past Easter. In our normal Sunday services, we hover around 900, with attendance exceeding 1,000 several times. These numbers will continue to expand as we grow, requiring four services every Sunday if we do not expand. The new addition will allow us to accommodate an additional 250+ seats (based upon configuration).
- **Large classroom and gathering space** – One challenge we have on Sunday mornings is not being able to offer a Foundations class for new believers. We simply do not have the additional room. With the reconfiguration of the offices, we will be able to offer an ongoing class for those who are saying “Yes” to Jesus.
- This large classroom will also be used for providing a 6th grade class during one of the services, as well as for a special needs kids class at other times.

This **ACT TWO** expansion project will cost approximately one million dollars, with some additional expenses being assigned to offices for our staff. While that amount appears to be a large amount to gather for any congregation, I am thrilled to let you know that we are already halfway to our goal!

Through the generosity of our Bridgeway family over the last six-years, and the strategic oversight and leadership of our finance department, we have half of the necessary funds already in reserves and waiting on construction to begin. Therefore, we will aim to raise **\$500,000** between the dates of Sunday, October 7th, until our Christmas services on Sunday, December 23rd.

I truly believe that as we “All Come Together” for **ACT TWO** through prayerful support and financial investment, we will reach this attainable goal. More importantly, we will see God do even greater things through our church family. People will be reached with the gospel, students will get connected, families will experience restoration, hope will be given, friendships will be cultivated, miracles will take place, souls will be won for the kingdom, and prayerfully, a revival will come to our community.

Bridgeway’s best days are still ahead! It is time for **ACT TWO!**

Gratefully yours,


Pastor Joël Eason

ACT TWO