



HOPE! Talks Conversations

Lunch, October 21, 2017

Sometimes we become mired in a place that is *too* familiar. We find it difficult to think differently about ourselves and our situations. It's amazing how God gives us a new perspective, a heavenly perspective, which illuminates possibilities we never even imagined.

As Psalm 36 sings, "For with You is the fountain of life; in Your light we see light," and in 1 Corinthians 2, "'What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has imagined'—the things God has prepared for those who love Him—these are the things God has revealed to us by His Spirit." Ready for God to do something new? Courage!



New congregations are often started with a handful of people and few resources, things that most small congregations already have! The difference is coming to town with a fresh perspective and a burning desire to reach the people who live there. Just for a moment, forget what you've been doing and place yourself into this story:

You have been asked to scout out the possibility of starting a new congregation in **your community**. You get to take everyone in your current congregation with you and whatever assets you have. The Bishop has offered you a vacant church building in the community (Look familiar? It's your old building!). **Nothing else is settled:** how you will worship, your leadership structure, outreach, mission, nothing - except this: **Your goal is to love God with all that you are; your purpose is to share God's love and make disciples of Jesus Christ.**

Got it? Ask God for help and then prayerfully consider the following:

1. What's going on in this community and who are the unreached or under-served people?

2. What assets are we bringing with us to this community?

(Do we want the building the Bishop offered? Is it's location, layout, and condition an asset to your goal and purpose? Can you make changes to improve it use? Would the Gospel be better served in another local facility or church, even a library or school?)

3. How can we best serve the Gospel in this community? (circle one)

- A) We start a new congregation. (Why? What would you do differently with this new start?)
- B) We all join another congregation in the community already meeting our goal and purpose, and increase the impact for the Gospel. (Who and why?)
- C) We join forces with another congregation (one or more) in the community and start a new congregation together to reach our community with the Good News. (Who and why?)
- D) We don't want to do this! Change stinks. (We can't expect our situation to change by doing the same things. Making changes large and small now may be painful, but there is life and growth in Spirit-led change; it's called transformation. Please reconsider.)

4) Any new insights? How can you incorporate these into your current situation?