

## Single Service - Meeting Recap, Sharing My Heart From Pastor Chris, May 1, 2019

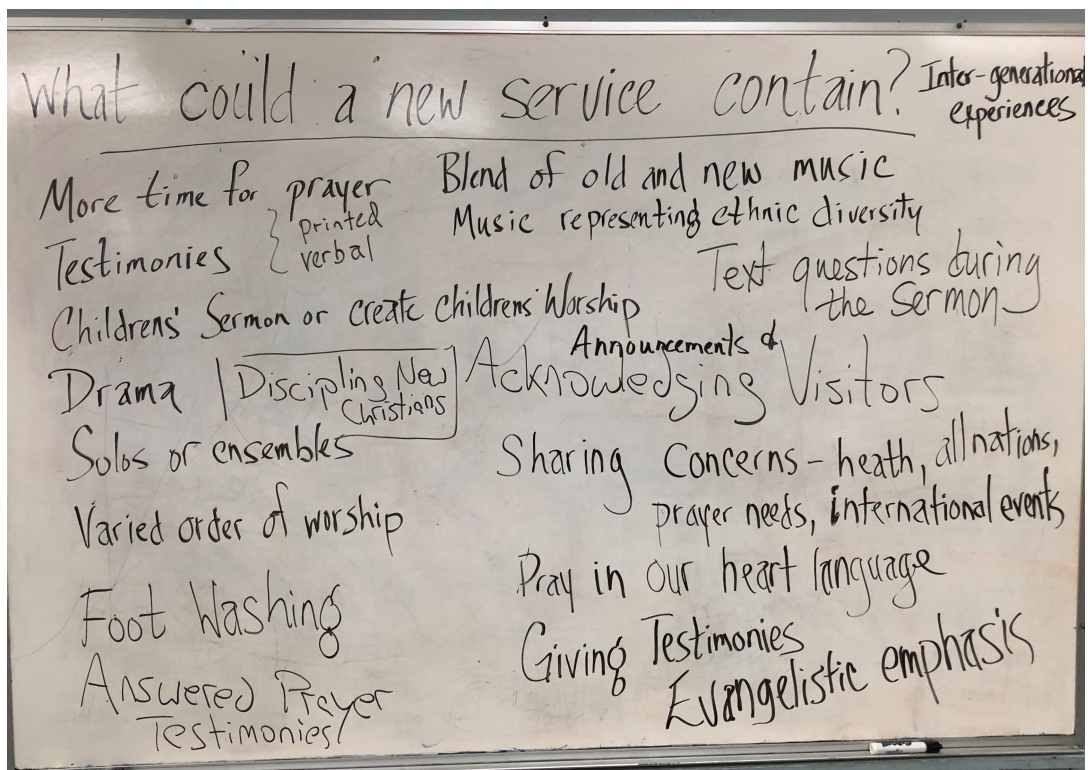
On Wednesday night we shared a meal together in the Fellowship Hall then took time to address a significant question: "If we did move to one service, what would our new Sunday morning schedule be?" I'd like to share a recap of our meeting and then share where my heart is on this matter of moving from two services to one.

### Recap of the meeting

Last week we set up two dry erase boards to brainstorm these specific questions: What types of gatherings should make up our Sunday morning? What should the schedule be? What new elements should these gatherings include?

The schedule that emerged most often was to have Sunday School/Adult Bible Fellowship at 9 AM and the Worship Service at 10:30 AM, with a 20 minute transition break in between. An 8:30 AM Prayer Time was also suggested to spend time asking God's blessings on the day's gatherings. We brainstormed different approaches to having a set fellowship time each week – a time to catch up with one another, share what God has been doing in our lives, and get to know visitors. The idea that seemed to have the most traction is to save a fellowship time for after the morning service. I have already heard a number of great ideas for how to best utilize our space for encouraging fellowship on Sunday mornings.

Most of the ideas shared about what elements should make up our Sunday morning related to the Worship Service. Here is the list that was shared:



As you can tell, this is an exciting list of great ideas for how we can enhance our Worship Service. The spirit of the conversation was upbeat and hopeful. Gaining 15 more minutes in a service is like getting a raise at work, and there was enthusiasm as we dreamed about how we might spend the extra time.

The next steps are to have a church-wide discussion time at our May 22nd Church Life Celebration and vote at the end of the service on Sunday, June 2nd.

### **My reflections on this issue**

This process of hearing from church members has been a delight to this point. I came into Wednesday night with one idea of what a new schedule should look like and left convinced that a different schedule would work better. In the process of talking about how we could restructure our Sunday morning, the most important thing to rise to the surface is the fact that schedule isn't the most important thing. What is most important is magnifying God's reputation through pursuing passionate worship, gospel-centered relationships, and proactive evangelism. May this continue to drive everything we do!

With those top priorities in place, the posture of my heart on this issue boils down to a simple conviction:

*We need to be together on Sunday mornings.*

For all the dozen other reasons I think moving to a single service is a good idea, this one remains at the top. We are one family in Christ. And on Sunday morning, I want our family to all be together. It is as simple as that. Though the move in that direction will require everyone to make adjustments, I believe this move will, in the long term, enhance our unity and cohesion around our identity as A House of Prayer for All Nations and our calling to Magnify God's Reputation.

Let me share some big-picture dreaming. The first moment I stepped foot in our Sanctuary, about 3 years ago, the Holy Spirit impressed on my heart, "I want to fill this room with disciples." I still believe God is going to do that. I see us moving to one exciting service that embodies all our ethnic and generational diversity. As we invite our friends and neighbors to know Jesus and join our family worship time, I would love to see the service grow from our current average of under 200 to over 350. When we cross that threshold, we would strategize about adding another service, so that we could have simultaneous service and Sunday School at both 9 AM and 10:30 AM. Our services would be identical in their tone and flavor.

It would be presumptuous to share this if I didn't believe that God will do it. But I do. I believe he has great things ahead for our church. Shifting to a single service is a step toward this growth. It is an opportunity to be together, see the wonderful family God has already brought together, and lock arms to make disciples of all nations.

Please continue to pray that God will make his name great through our gathering together and our mission to our lost neighbors!