

July 2010



# HAPPY NOTES *at home*

for the Vineyard Church family



Summer Questions

by Happy Leman

## **Summer – That Favorite Time of Year**

Sun, water, fun, picnics, fireworks – all are part of the great 3 month period that we call summer. It is a time to soak up the sun, take vacations, refresh ourselves, and get ready to return to school, work, etc. as fall approaches.

## **Summer Also Means Transitions**

Summer's also a time when churches get ready for the new year starting September 1. Since much has been happening at our church, I thought you might enjoy an update regarding these transitions. Here are answers to some of the questions that are being asked giving you a behind the scenes look at things that are happening.

## **What is the Status of Ben and Tina?**

They are busy preparing to plant a new Vineyard church in Peoria. They will be gone sometime between January and June 1, 2011. In addition, they are quite active around the church at the present time. Ben continues to be actively involved in working with the multi-sites, pastoring, and transitioning all of his responsibilities. Since we are also considering a major building addition for our children, Ben is working with the architect and our team on a plan that will work best for us. Should the plans come in as we hope, we will most likely have a giving campaign within the next 12 months. Ben would be instrumental in leading a giving campaign if God is leading the church in that direction. Be praying for discernment and wisdom for our next growth steps for the Urbana campus. Tina is training her replacement, Scott Joellenbeck, over the next 4 months. Scott comes to us from Columbus, Ohio with vast experience in Accounting/HR. Help me welcome Scott and his family (Becky, his wife, and Trevor).

## **What is the story behind the “Relay Race” sermon series?**

We've been asked a number of interesting questions about the videos we've been showing as a promo regarding the Relay Race sermon series. Some people think we are all turning our jobs over to the person that we are paired with. While there is an element of truth in turning our jobs over to others, the story behind this sermon series is a little different. With the staff restructuring due to the launching of multi-sites and Ben planting in Peoria, we are filling the holes and gaps that have been created. We are using this time to intentionally take the opportunity to give the church staff a younger feel and provide more balance. Thus we've recently added Rob (Putty) Putman and Adam Waters on a part-time basis. Last year we added Julie Yoder part-time as well as Leah Wenger full-time as our high school pastor. These 4 give us a much younger feel as they are all mostly in their 20's. In fact, the staff is now much better balanced age wise as we have about equal numbers of pastors in their 20's, 30's, 40's, 50's, and 60's. We view this balance as essential if we're going to be a viable church in the years ahead. (For more on restructuring, see the Happy Note of May 2010.)

## **What about a Paxton Multi-Site and Jim Wood?**

The Paxton multi-site has emerged somewhat suddenly. Essentially the people in the Paxton area saw the success of Danville and Sullivan and said “Hey, we could do the very same thing!” Under the passionate leadership of Jim and DeDe Wood (who happen to live in Paxton) they have around 100 committed people who are working diligently toward a late September release date. They have found a storefront that they’re rehabbing while actively spreading the word throughout Paxton and areas north that a new Vineyard will be launching in the fall. This has forced Jim Wood to give up his role as our worship leader as he will be involved in Paxton every weekend. He is still involved, however, 3-4 days a week working at the Urbana campus in Pastoral Care and overseeing the tech ministries.

## **What about the Bloomington Multi-site and Jim Egli?**

In 1986, a group from Champaign showed interest in planting a church in Bloomington. That fall, Larry and Marji Larson became the leaders, brought the group to be a full church plant, and held their first Sunday service on Easter of 1987. After 9 years, they turned the church over to David Bielby, who is still the pastor today. David is now resigning to become a full-time missionary in our East China / Taiwan mission partnership. They are essentially handing the church back to us. This church has enough money to pay for a salary and to pay building rent – thus it probably will not cost us anything to oversee this church. For now the church will be a multi-site using the same principles that we’ll have at our other 3 multi-site locations. Jim Egli will spend 2 days a week including Sunday over in Bloomington. The remainder of his time will be overseeing our Community Life Team which includes small groups here at the Urbana campus.

## **What is Happening with Happy and Dianne?**

Di and I continue to function as Senior Pastors over all campuses. Both of us are facing a time of renewed vision and enthusiasm for doing the things that God has given us as our Vineyard DNA. In the long run, we realize the need to find a succession team / plan. While significant steps have been made in this direction, nothing yet is in concrete. The goal is to make a seamless transition sometime in the next 7-10 years to new leadership that will allow the Vineyard Church to continue and grow to what it is projected to be.

## **What is the Biggest Need Right Now?**

We need everyone to pray as we are in an exciting and exhilarating season. However, we are also stretched very thin by giving away so many of our good leaders. We are committed to giving away our best but that means we must also replace them. Pray that God sends us the right men and women to fill the slots. In addition pray for new people to fill the holes left by those who’ve gone to Sullivan, Danville, Paxton, and even Bloomington. If you are feeling God’s prompting to step up into leadership, please contact Carla Green or Jim Egli.

## **Final Thoughts**

These are really exciting times. We’re seeing God move through our church in ways we never dreamed. I believe we can fill all of Central Illinois with Vineyard churches. Let’s put our time, energy, and money together with the confidence in the Holy Spirit and watch what happens. I think we’ll tell stories for the rest of our lives about the next 10 years. Thanks for being friends and partners.

**Get more information and register for Action Weekend and other events at <http://thevineyardchurch.us>**

# ACTION WEEKEND

friday july 23, 6:45-9:30pm

saturday july 24, 8:45am-12pm

[except Marriage Coaching & Tapas, which is only friday]

**Learning to Minister Like Jesus**

**Marriage Coaching & Tapas**

**How to Lead a High Impact  
Small Group**

**Biblical Overview** 

**S.H.A.P.E.**

