

New Wednesday Evening Service

7-10-20

By: Joel R. Greenwood

1. What is the vision?

My desire is for our church to grow numerically and spiritually. This means I want to go wider and deeper (Evangelism & Discipleship). I want us to reach more people on a weekly basis with the Good News of Jesus Christ. I also want everyone who calls Fairview “home” to be in a small group where true community takes place. Before the pandemic, we offered two in-person services on Sunday mornings as well as Sunday morning Small Groups & Wednesday evening Small Groups. There have also been other groups of individuals who meet via friendships, accountability groups, etc. It has been very hard to track what groups people are in, what the purpose of the group actually is and whether it is a discipleship group or not.

2. Why aren't we growing numerically?

I believe there are at least two reasons we are not growing numerically. The first reason we aren't growing numerically is because we are only offering two services on Sunday mornings. Experts say that when a room is 80% full, the average person won't come in. There are many times throughout the year that our sanctuary is 80% full on a Sunday morning. Experts believe this number will change to 60% when everyone comes back together after the Coronavirus lock-down. That means when a room is 60% full, the average person will turn back around and leave. Our sanctuary holds roughly 600 people. That means 360 people is 60% full. So, if both services were at 60% full, we would have 720. Our average attendance on Sunday mornings is over 720. When will new people come? Where will they sit to be comfortable? I don't believe Fairview will grow numerically until we add a 3rd service.

The second reason I believe we aren't growing numerically is because the majority of people who attend Fairview lack genuine relationship in a discipleship environment. If you are connected relationally to a church, you are much more likely to be okay with the philosophy of “unity over preference”. It is much harder to leave a church over “small” things when you are intimately connected in a relationship with others who attend. We need to do a better job of connecting people with others in a real Small Group setting. This is going to be our goal moving forward in the fall of 2020.

3. Aren't most people from Fairview in a small group?

The majority of our current “regular attendees” attend some type of group at least on a monthly basis. This would include our Sunday morning groups, our fellowship groups, our Wednesday evening groups and the others who meet throughout the week. At the same time, the majority of these groups do not really function as “Small Groups”. How do we know this? I know this because during the pandemic the majority of Fairview

people have felt lost without the Sunday service. Don't get me wrong. I love the fact that everyone misses gathering together on Sunday mornings to worship and learn from God's word. Trust me, I enjoy that time as well. But, the current pandemic has shown how valuable and necessary a functioning small group is. Those individuals that are part of a small group where discipleship and fellowship are taking place have stayed connected during this season and have weathered the storm much better mentally and spiritually. I want to prepare us for a future where our Sunday morning gathering may be taken away again. We need to be forward thinking, not to mention that meeting in Small Groups is a Biblical philosophy.

4. What is the plan to address the current situation?

I'm glad you asked. First, we would like to add a weekly service. We currently have worship services on Sunday mornings at 9 AM and 10:30 AM. We want to add a third service on Wednesdays at 6:45 PM.

5. Why Wednesdays at 6:45 PM?

There are many reasons why Wednesdays at 6:45 PM seems like the perfect time. Let me list them for you.

- We have an awesome Awana program for the children to plug into at that time.
- We have an awesome teen program for the teens to plug into at that time.
- We already have the nursery room and toddler room staffed.
- There are many adults who drop off their kids or teens on Wednesdays and leave. We may be able to attract them to stay for service if they don't already have a church.
- It would allow us to record this service to replay as our "Live!" service on the following Sunday for the internet and the Radio.
- It is a completely different day and time-slot than our other two services. This allows us to attract completely different people.
- It allows those who would miss on a Sunday due to sporting events, vacation, family get-togethers, etc. to stay connected.
- It has the potential to catch those people in our county who don't want to "lose" their Sunday morning because of the lakes (especially in the summer). I know this seems sacrilegious to those who have always gone to church on Sundays, but if we can reach others on a different day of the week, why not?
- Our worship team already comes on Wednesday evenings to practice for the Sunday service. They would have to come earlier than normal, but would also leave way earlier than normal.
- The church staff, who would need to be at this service, are already in the routine of coming on Wednesday evenings.
- It allows those who serve on Sunday mornings to attend a Wednesday service.

6. Would the Wednesday service be different from the Sunday service?

The short answer is “no”. It will be the same music and the same message. The only difference will be the “dress”. It may be more casual.

7. Will there be nursery and toddler rooms available for the Wednesday service in the summer of 2021.

Yes, that is our goal.

8. Will there be children’s ministry available for the Wednesday service in the summer of 2021.

Yes, that is our goal.

9. When will the new Wednesday Service start?

The first service will take place on September 9th, 2020 which is the first Wednesday evening after Labor Day. That service will be identical to the Sunday September 13th service.

10. How many people do you think will come to a Wednesday evening service?

We don’t have any idea. This is something completely new that we haven’t tried before. In order to make that service less awkward for those who check it out, I am going to ask 30 families to attend that service for the first six to eight weeks to help “fill the sanctuary”. We may put up the black cloths to block out the side pews, so the sanctuary feels more full until we need those seats.

11. Will you promote this service to the community?

Absolutely. We will advertise in the newspaper, on the radio, through Facebook, putting up billboards and have material for you to give to your friends.