

**Leadership Community Meeting**  
**June 14, 2008**

Agenda

- 9:00am Breakfast
- 9:30am Call to Worship (KDK)
- 9:40am Welcome and Overview of the Morning (Brad)
- 9:50am Summary of Feedback from Listening Process (Mark)
- 10:35am Staff Confession & Prayer Time (Brad/Staff/All)
- 11:00am MY09 Priorities & Dialogue (Brad)

# Leadership Community Meeting

## June 14, 2008

### Listening Report: (Mark P-H)

#### 1. Positive Aspects of Small Groups, Restoration & Intercession

- a. Key sources of community holding people in the River
- b. People love one another, look forward to being together, support one another in hardships
- c. Some are taking missional risk,
- d. Healing path has broad participation throughout the church

#### 2. Ministry Yearnings

- a. Women's ministry
- b. Singles ministry
- c. Communication channels
- d. Board of Directors
- e. Sunday AM
- f. Downtown Ministry
- g. Pastoral Care/Body Care
- h. High School

#### 3. Tensions

- a. Sunday Worship tension: (High tension)
- b. Communication/Connection to Staff/AC (High tension among a significant group)
- c. Diversity of lifestyle (High angst)
- d. Diversity of spiritualities: (Submerged but significant tension)
- e. Vision process
- f. Life Stage

#### 4. Analysis of Tensions

- a. These tensions are not synergistic at this time
- b. Spiritual Warfare
- c. Owning tensions as real issues and locating ourselves as participants vs. spectators
- d. Need for communication training in high stakes conversations
- e. Tensions have been known by the staff and leaders, but not to this degree
- f. Pastors need to be aligned with one another in the Spirit

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## June 14, 2008

### Initiatives for MY09

- Establish in our church and leadership culture the convictions and practices that build a reconciled and reconciling community
  - Equip people for “high-stakes” conversations
  - Promote cross-pollination of ministry areas
  - Resolve tensions in prayer, dialogue, discernment of 3<sup>rd</sup> way or either/or with tensions
  - Clarify the identity of The River
  - Increase pastoral connections amongst leaders and members
- Raise the bar for small group alignment, discipleship effectiveness, and capacity
  - Invest deeply in Small Group Leaders
  - Build a common “River Small Group” ethos
    - Common covenant for River small groups
    - Small groups develop in weak areas, e.g. mission or exhortation/admonition, etc.
  - Increase Small Group Capacity
    - Create 2-3 new groups
    - Explore creative on-ramp ideas (e.g. 4-6 week experience for new attendees)
- Make Jesus known to our neighbors (suburban seekers and downtown)
  - Sunday am
  - Seeker groups
  - Downtown exploration
- Engage leaders in the entrepreneurial development of ministry
  - Suburban discipleship
  - Women’s ministry
  - Singles ministry
- Continue to strengthen infrastructure that supports the inter-connection of the body
  - Board of directors established
  - Communication channels clarified (email? Current? Sunday? Small group announcements?)
  - Pastoral care/crisis
  - Giving Team transparency
  - Re-launch website

# Leadership Community Meeting

## June 14, 2008

### Listening Report: (Mark P-H)

1. **Positive Aspects of Small Groups, Restoration & Intercession** – generally these are key places of community holding people in the River. People love one another, look forward to being together, support one another in hardships, some are taking missional risk, supporting each other in life stage issues. The Healing Path is successful in its program diffused throughout the church, etc.
2. **Ministry Yearnings**
  - a. **Women's ministry:** Desire for one that "equals" the men's ministry, frustration that it has stalled out in the past with inadequate/shifting staff support and lay leadership problems. There is not one single vision of what this would look like.
  - b. **Singles ministry:** Activities to invite friends to that do not have a "hook up" climate, opportunities to identify callings/spiritual gifts/career wisdom, service opportunities. There is also a yearning to be recognized as a group of members whom matter, who are represented in the program and public face of the River.
  - c. **Communication channels:** Many want to be better informed, including many leaders who couldn't name the ministry focus for this year or the 3-Stranded Cord, how people are hired, etc.
  - d. **Board of Directors:** Many want the church to have governance that is transparent, that is publicly acknowledged, nominations, accountable to the congregation, that staff are accountable for goals, etc.
  - e. **Sunday AM:** 1) Answer the question, "What is the role of seekers on Sunday AM?" 2) Greater openness to charismatic expressions, Vineyard style liturgy – "uninterrupted" 30 min. singing, altar call with words of knowledge, healings, etc. 3) More predictable experiences and safety to not participate in multi-sensory activities, but to sit quietly with the music. More instruction on what it is or what it means if it is done. Many expressed the unpredictability of Sunday AM and the activities as reasons they didn't invite people to River (fear of freaking them out.) e.g. Sunday of the beads at the tables.
  - f. **Downtown Ministry:** Many expressed a desire for the church to have more of a downtown ministry than just the Wash. VBS week, something they could participate in that was flexible, variety of levels of commitment (starting with low risk/high grace), continuous, week-ends vs. mid-week.
  - g. **Pastoral Care/Body Care:** Desire for assurance of pastoral care, Body care in crises, from marital strife to death in family, \$ needs for medical/dental problems, housing, pregnancy/miscarriage, even food bank.

- h. **High School:** What is happening? Is there a future for their kids at the church?

### 3. **Description of Tensions**

- a. Sunday Worship tension: (High tension) A group of individuals (faction?) still holds out for the old style, wanting KDK/Brad to be different leaders, to offer an experience closer to Keith/previous worship style vs. Other collection/group who like Sunday morning, feel challenged by the teaching, the multi-ethnic worship is leading us towards our future, bonded with Brad/KDK/David as the public leaders of River. (A third group just don't understand why we do what we do on Sunday AM's, feel confused and afraid of polarities. Q: will prayer, listening, love, teaching & dialogue bring these groups together or is worship style, esp. music, too deeply connected with people's inner child?)
- b. Communication/Connection to Staff/AC: (High tension with a significant group) those who feel informed, have an ongoing relationship w/staff, or are able to flow w/things vs. those who have a low trust for staff based on past/current problems. They need clearer communication, more transparency, more participation in key decisions, clear definition for AC as a board, process of nominations, etc. (Some feel IV is a secret fraternity controlling the River, e.g. KDK hire, Mark P-H). There are also those who just want more relationship w/staff or "insiders" (many of these feel shut out, some are envious, feel unimportant)
- c. Diversity of life: (High angst here not tension.) Suburban families' role in the River still fraught with confusion/insecurity, lack of effective models and discipleship/discernment of calling/equipping in the River for them vs. the downtown members who are called/dedicated to urban life of discipleship and ministry, e.g. Martin's calling as a trajectory. There is a fantasy that moving downtown leads immediately to radical/holistic ministry.
- d. Diversity of spiritualities: (Submerged but significant tension here.) One group is traditional evangelical, i.e. Bible and obedience focused, see themselves as obedience oriented, are stereotyped as "activistic/overly rational time bombs" vs. The other group is Charismatic/inner life, i.e. Holy Spirit as healer (esp. of emotional wounds, sinful past) and indwelling guide, this group sees themselves as "being" oriented, stereotyped as "navel gazing, irrational". (Currently there seems to be respect/abrasion issues, especially the Healing Path/Intercession folks who feel the justice orientation (obedience/activism) has greater voice on Sundays, especially guest speakers like Larry Martin from IJM, Mark Scandrette, who they feel are spiritually naïve, abrasive, even toxic at the end of spectrum, just telling people to "do" more activistic behaviors w/o it overflowing from love relationship with God. Some have been burned by following such teaching.)

- e. Diversity re: Vision process: A large group (majority of leaders?) cannot stand the idea of being in transition, working on documents/slogans/words because these seemed to have failed in the past, poor follow through. Many also admit that they don't see the River as having a clear purpose that unites us and directs our course. The idea of any energy spent on defining ourselves seems like a waste to them, taking away from ministry. vs. Another group (smaller) feel that we can clarify our purpose/mission in a Spirit led process, that we need to do it bc we have weak esprit, we do not have a vital mission which unites us, etc. (There is a large % who would welcome a uniting mission statement as long as it doesn't take too much time).
- f. Life Stage: Families w/younger kids have now become the majority "power block" in the church along w/middle school parents vs. those who feel neglected – celibates, unmarrieds still seeking, those w/2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grade, high school kids, college, et al. Several singles point out that many singles have left the church in the last 18 months because of no singles ministry. (The empty nesters seem happy as bridge builders).

#### 4. **Analysis of Tensions**

- a. These tensions are not synergistic at this time; they are too numerous to be ignored, they are sucking the heart out of people; there is not enough dialogue and relationship between the opposing camps. Some must be reconciled because of the animosity or distress that resides under the surface or on the surface. People are still walking away from the River as a result of them, many who are on the fence with a wait and see attitude. Some want the staff/Brad to just decide in an "either/or" model and let the chips fall where they may.
- b. Spiritual Warfare: High level of tension, cynicism, distrust of leadership, disillusionment with River points to a spiritual stronghold, to spiritual attack. Is there a foundational sin in our past? Are we merely experiencing in our Body the spiritual strongholds in our Valley? Is God breaking us of our independence, competence, and control? There seems to be an ignorance to the devil's schemes against us, or a lack of united prayer.
- c. There is a need for exposing/owning these as real issues and locating ourselves as participants, spectators, in denial, etc. Some patterns of behavior are sin; some are merely heart-felt differences. The first step is calling the church leaders to repent and grieve, then engage with reconciliation and real dialogue vs. glossing it over, continued avoidance/gossip, or denial.
- d. Many of us need communication training for high stakes conversations like dialogue, speaking truth in love, staying in the relationships where tension exists vs. distancing, dealing with emotional tensions, breaking worldly patterns of communications, e.g. armchair critic, gossip, blame, etc.
- e. These tensions have been known by the staff and leaders, but not to this degree. They have been addressed programmatically, w/o a spiritual

stronghold understanding and grass roots 'among the people' pastoral approach. The staff culture from the beginning was program excellence and office based. This needs to change for our future health.

- I. This year's means of addressing them were – the 3 strands, AM of equipping, missional risk, and the travel guide. They did not address these real tensions fully and these means were not maximized in their impact.
  - II. Over the past 3 years, the consultants suggestions that were done: work on staff culture (cleaning up toxicity), staff values retreat, tracking goals in MY07, integration of goals in MY08. Stabilize the leadership team, Brad anointed as lead pastor.
- f. The pastors need to be aligned with one another in the Spirit, owning the whole ministry of the River, facing "brutal facts" in Gospel Hope. Then calling people to prayer, godliness in unity, mutual respect, Gospel maturity in communication. The pastors also need grass roots connection to every member, e.g. Small groups. Our staff dialogues/intercession times have begun to train us to participate in high stakes conversations and align us on staff (since 4/8/08).