



ROSE DRIVE FRIENDS CHURCH

Dear Friends,

This is an important letter about recent staff transitions and, while it is longer than our usual communications, I hope you will read it all the way through.

At our Congregational Meeting on February 10, we outlined two simultaneous realities that exist at Rose Drive Friends Church right now. One, centers on the incredible growth God is creating in our ministry in the areas of discipleship, community, and spiritual freedom. The other reality, has to do with our finances. While the number of people who are giving has increased this year, the actual amount given has declined. This fact has left us in a serious financial situation. As a result, at the meeting we shared the need to make serious cuts to our budget.

Since that meeting, I, along with our Elders and Executive team, have prayed and approved a plan that includes decreasing our staff expenditures. To that end, we have made some staff changes that are important for you to know about.

First, after 20 years on staff, Chris Steiger is retiring. We are replacing Chris' full-time position with a part-time position. Rob Tingley will fill this part-time role, overseeing our finances. Rob has served as an Elder for several years and has shown great acumen in managing finances. Furthermore, we have promoted Caleb Darden to Director of Facilities and Technology which will add the management of our facility to his current responsibilities. Caleb has an incredible work ethic and an unbelievable ability to stretch a dollar. The rest of Chris' responsibilities will be divided among our Pastoral Staff.

Next, we had two staff members who have sensed the Lord leading them to different paths in each of their lives. Once they were made aware of the need to cut our staff, they both felt convinced this would be the time to trust that leading and submit their resignations.

- DJ Asch, who has served our Middle School Ministry for the past 3 1/2 years, will be resigning his position at the end of June, finishing the school year with our current Middle School students. Having graduated with his M.Div. this past December, DJ feels the need to seek full-time employment at this stage of his life. We are grateful for DJ's love for and service to our kids. This position will continue to be a ¾ time position and we anticipate a smooth transition in leadership this summer.
- Kaitlyn Tingley, who has served on our Communication Team in a part-time capacity, has felt the Lord calling her to stay home with the children she and her husband Matt are

fostering to adopt. Kaitlyn, in solidarity with our mission as a church, has offered to volunteer her time and continue to manage some communication responsibilities from home. We will not be filling Kaitlyn's position and we are grateful for her willingness to volunteer in such a helpful way.

In addition to these changes, we have had to make the very difficult decision to lay off two additional staff members - one from our Administrative Staff and one from our Pastoral Staff. These decisions are always painful and challenging. Please know that these cuts are financially driven and have nothing to do with our love and appreciation for these people, nor are the cuts reflective of a desire to cut ministry. On Tuesday, we had the difficult and agonizing task of notifying Jason Morones and Deanne Hunt that as of June 30 we would no longer be able to fund their positions.

- Jason Morones has served on the Rose Drive Friends Church Staff for over 11 years beginning as our Middle School Pastor, and serving in many roles since that time including Family Pastor, Guest Relations, and College Ministry. We love Jason and his family. I would like you to know he handled the painful news with grace and integrity. We are praying for the Lord to open new doors for him that will not only provide for his family but will utilize the unique gifts he has. We will miss Jason's presence and his input into the mission of RDF. We have a severance package for Jason that pays him through June 30.
- Deanne Hunt has served on our Administrative Staff for 7 years. Deanne has always been a team player; we have appreciated her faithfulness and the kind spirit she has brought to our offices. Her kind spirit was evident even in the way she received and has responded to the news of being laid off. We offered for Deanne to keep working until June 30 if she so desired. Deanne has decided it would be better for her to step away as of next week.

Lastly, on Thursday of last week Christian Santiago unexpectedly resigned his position as our High School Pastor, effective March 7. Christian has taken a job at another church where he and his wife will both be full-time employees. We were surprised with this news, however we see God doing something good, even though we didn't anticipate it. Our staff and leaders are assessing this vital ministry and will be making a plan to move forward.

If at this point you are feeling a variety of different emotions, like sadness, concern, confidence, hope, and expectation, I want you to know we are feeling those emotions, too. These are not days we would choose, but we have seen the Lord moving in the midst. Last week, knowing I was heading into layoffs and other staff changes, I inquired of the Lord a bit distressed, asking Him what He was up to. I felt the Lord say to me, "I am directly answering your prayers."

Over the next several days, the Lord demonstrated a glimpse of what that meant. For example, in the face of their disappointment, several of our high school students asked if they could step into leadership in our High School group to help us in this unexpected transition. They put a

plan together and asked us to help them. Amazing! Furthermore, our volunteer champions in both Middle School and High School are leading us in exemplifying what it means to live for the sake of others. They love our students and they faithfully invest in their lives.

Through all of the changes, I have also been very encouraged by the response of our staff, elders, leaders, and our church family. I am overwhelmed by the offers of help and support I am receiving daily. I know our ministries are going to grow as a result.

I know this is a lot to take in. It has been a challenging week for us. If you have questions, or want to talk about these changes, some of the Elders and I will be available after the second service on March 10, in room D108 (on the southwest side of the gym) to meet with you.

I want to remind you, not because it is the spiritual thing to say as your pastor, but because I believe it is true, we serve a God who does immeasurably more than we can think or imagine! He is going before us. He is working. He has a future of hope ahead of us. I look forward to walking this journey together in anticipation of what the Lord will do next.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dave Asch', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dave Asch
Lead Pastor