

TRANSITION AT GRACE CHAPEL What Should Your New Preacher Expect of You?

THEME: As the month of July approaches, Grace Chapel is preparing to receive the Huyghebaert family and to support the beginning of his work as our new Senior Minister. Last week our small groups discussed some of the expectations we have of him. Now it is time to think in terms of the reasonable expectations he will have of us. The point of these two weeks of reflection is to bring all of us to a state of eager readiness for what God wills to accomplish in the life of our church family over the next few months. Let's lay a good foundation for years of productive ministry as the people of God.

ICE BREAKER

1. Imagine that you are moving to a new state, new church, and new job. What sort of anxieties would you feel?
2. Are you aware that the Huyghebaerts are feeling those same anxieties as they prepare to join us?
3. Let your opening prayer for this week's time together focus on your concerns for a safe, uncomplicated, and positive experience for Paul, Lori, Andrew, Nate, and their soon-to-be-born daughter.

THINK

1. What are some of the cultural expectations of churches in 2015?
2. Are some of these modern expectations unreasonable? Distractions from the biblical expectations of a church?
3. What are *three* primary strengths you see at Grace Chapel?

EXAMINE

Read [Luke 4:16-24](#) as background to the following questions:

1. What are some of the distinctive features of the Jewish *synagogue*? How did its routine life and function differ from the *Temple*?
2. Did the life of the early church resemble *synagogue* or *Temple* more closely? What were some of the practical differences this would have made for the earliest Christians?
3. How has the Christian church become more Temple-like (e.g., clergy-laity distinction) over the span of church history? Why do you think these changes took place?
4. Reformers such as Martin Luther attempted to call the church back to a simpler and more participatory lifestyle. What did Luther mean by his famous "priesthood of all believers" emphasis?

5. Do you think Grace Chapel is prepared to receive Paul into a shared ministry (i.e., priesthood of all believers)? That it can avoid the temptation to see him as “clergy” and to expect him to function as a “hired professional”? Discuss.

Read [1 Peter 2:4-12](#) as background for discussing the following questions:

1. The *crescendo* of this text comes at v.9. Begin your discussion of these verses by sharing your thoughts on this description of the church.
2. Now review the larger text: What features of a church’s life qualify it for the sort of descriptive praise as v.9 offers? *Note:* Feel free to review key ideas Peter has shared in the first chapter of the epistle in answering this.
3. How does the idea of a “priesthood of all believers” find reinforcement in this text?
4. Sunday’s sermon referred to a Presbyterian Church that began a policy several years ago of “amateurizing” its ministries. Do you recall some of the ideas the church emphasized? Do you understand the reasoning?
5. How does this concept apply to the expectations Paul should have of Grace Chapel?

THIS WEEK: What an exciting adventure begins for us this week! End your study session – and carry the idea with you in prayer through the week – with a prayer of thanksgiving for the opportunities on the horizon for Grace Chapel.