

To the Congregations of Calvary Bible Fellowship and Grace Evangelical Church:

As we approach the end of our two months of combined services the leadership teams from both churches thought it would be good to bring everyone up to date on our progress so far, as well as what steps might need to be taken to effect a union of our churches. It has not been our intent to avoid communication but rather to see how we would come together in fellowship during this time. We have encouraged everyone to ask questions of their respective leadership team and are thankful for those of you that have expressed your concerns.

The two leadership teams have met together several times, starting in the fall of 2018. We have attempted to meet about once a month. To this point we have been discussing our respective constitutions and bylaws, as well as our philosophy of ministry and goals of uniting as one congregation. We have also begun to look at the financial aspects of a potential merger. Recently we were able to have a conference call with Dr. Matt Davis of Maranatha Baptist University. Dr. Davis is an attorney who has been instrumental in helping other churches merge together. He is more familiar with the legal implications and the “how-to” of church mergers. He has offered to continue assisting us.

There are several items that still need to be worked out. First, we need to know what the legal aspects of uniting entail. What is necessary from the State of Wisconsin? City of Madison? Second, there are financial considerations. Everything from combining budgets to working with the bank to change necessary paperwork on the mortgage. Third, what will we call this new entity? Fourth, what will the constitution, by-laws and doctrinal statements look like? This would include provisions for church membership and leadership positions. On a practical level, how would we divide responsibilities and duties among the new membership? These and many other considerations need to be weighed in the process.

The combined leadership team discussed last week the starting of a time-line to facilitate our becoming a single entity. No final decision to merge has been made. This is a general plan only. We are aware that the time element may flex shorter or longer. We are also aware that at some point either or both churches may decide a merger is not right at this time. The general plan is as follows:

### **May**

- Use the month of May to meet with our individual congregations. This will give both bodies the opportunity to speak freely about the thoughts, concerns, or questions that we each will have.
- Pastor Cournoyer will be at Grace on May 19 and use the Sunday School time to answer questions regarding philosophy of ministry, goals, directions, etc.
- We will have another joint leadership meeting on May 23.
- Dr. Davis has requested that we put together a side-by-side comparison of both church’s doctrinal position and by-laws. He has agreed to look over that comparison to see if there are concerns. That comparison will be made available to anyone that requests it.

- Dr. Davis has suggested that sometime near the end of the month, if things look favorable that both churches sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). This is a non-binding affirmation by both churches, boards and pastor showing the desire to continue the process of heading toward a merger. This would be voted on by each church individually. Again, this is not a final vote to merge, but a vote to continue the process.

#### **June**

- If a MOU is signed by both congregations, Dr. Davis has offered to come and preach on a Sunday morning (possibly June 9<sup>th</sup>) and spend the Sunday School time sharing his insights into church mergers and answer questions.
- Continue to work through legal and/or financial issues. We will discuss the possibility of meeting together during that time.

#### **July**

- Possibly finish the legal and/or financial issues and if everything is still favorable consider a final vote to merge, possibly late August or early September.

Again, this is a general guideline only—no final decision has been made to merge.

We as the leadership team are excited by the prospect of uniting as one body. We truly believe that we can be “better together.” We should focus on Exalting the Savior, Edifying the Saints and Evangelizing Sinners. Be looking for the positive...the good...and what we will gain, not what we might lose.

Serving Him,  
The Leadership Team