

Questions From Vision Sunday

The following are responses to questions submitted via email as a follow-up to our September 9, 10am Vision Sunday gathering:

1. My question relates to church plants. I admire and agree with the model of planting new churches rather than creating a mega-church. Apostles seems very committed to the effort, with two church plants in recent years and a current staff member tasked with the next plant. I would welcome updates on how the church plants are doing. What is going well for Redeemer and Christ Our Hope? What challenges do they have? How can we support their efforts? How can we be in prayer for them? What lessons are being learned for the next plant?

Thanks for this question. With so many things going on in a church it is easy to lose sight of the progress of existing efforts. We are hoping to publish reports twice annually from our church planters. Look for a report in January that will be presented at our town hall meeting and included in the Pulse. In the meantime you can be in prayer in the following ways:

For *Christ our Hope (COH)*, in Wilmington:

- Pray for good response as COH organizes hurricane relief efforts for their community.
- Pray that Apostles could be a good partner to them in these efforts.
- Rejoice that they are large enough to seek a new building for their Sunday morning worship which is now 60+ attenders.
- Pray for continued growth and vitality.

For *Redeemer Anglican* in southeast Raleigh:

- Pray for pastor Ford Jordan as he leads the church through some transitions in staff and membership.
- Pray for continued growth. They currently see 80+ attenders each Sunday.
- Pray as they move to a new location a few blocks away from their current spot. Pray for their relationships with the church that will be hosting them.
- Pray for all these challenges and for godly and wise decisions amongst their leadership.

2. Recommendations from one of our Community Groups:

That the student ministry teach about how to be pure sexually in a very sex filled world. And how to keep your mouths on the right track when bad words are bandied all over the student public school halls.

This is a very important suggestion, given the cultural approach to sexuality and the age and stage of life of teenagers as they mature. We offered a class for students back in 2017 called Theology of the Body, but we have not put into place a regular offering for students. We are in discussions about addressing sexuality and purity with our youth on a regular basis, at least annually, maybe twice a year. We are considering a series in the spring that addresses these issues along with the Christian perspective and response to sexual assault, abuse, and coercion. And we welcome any resources or suggestions as we consider the best ways to engage our young people on these topics.

3. That there will be some focus on marriage and married couples staying and keeping their vows and staying together.

Last spring, Pastor Eric Bolash and Pauline Byron ran a four-week Marriage Builder group, using materials entitled, "Scary Close." Ten young couples were invited, and three participated. The target was couples in their first 5-8 years of marriage. Eric and Pauline have scheduled another four-week group for three more couples (nine were invited), starting Monday October 22, 6:30-8:30PM. The group is open to any couples.

We are also looking at a Spring Marriage weekend led by a good friend of mine, the Rev. Dr. William Henry, and his wife, psychologist Dana Henry, for any and all interested.

4. More communication on all events i.e.- I had no idea there was church at the Cardinal.

The worship service at the Cardinal, which takes place Sundays at 10:00 AM, is a fairly recent development. We hadn't rolled out any official word on it prior to Vision Sunday, as the team was still in formation. However, we are planning on more formally announcing it within the next few weeks and opening up the path to involvement for our members.

For all other communications, we typically try to announce major events from the pulpit on Sundays, in the Pulse, on our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/cotaraleigh/> and Instagram @cotaraleigh, as well as in the bulletin. In addition, we sometimes pass messages of upcoming events through our community group leaders. We also have Instagram for youth @cotastudents, and young adults @cotavine. We do try to limit announcements from the pulpit on Sundays, otherwise we find that the announcements get diluted. We are open to suggestions for how to make our communications more comprehensive

5. Suggestion: Start a Women's knitting/crochet church sanctioned events bi-weekly or monthly.

Possibly to knit hats, afghans, mittens etc for people in need???

Great idea! We (our staff) encourage people to feel free to initiate a new ministry. However, we (the staff), for the most part, do not take on the responsibility of starting new ministries and all that entails (announcements, recruiting, hosting, and resourcing), as we have limited resources of time and capacity. We are happy to meet with anyone interested in starting a new ministry to talk through how to initiate and sustain that ministry.

6. Regarding the "30" people saved goal for this year, would like to find out how are we going to measure this number. All goals should be measured and counted so success can be illuminated later in the year when the goal is achieved.

Agreed! We have not planned this out yet, but do need to determine a way of reporting, celebrating, and noting the number of people who come to first-time faith in Jesus. This issue will be will be on an upcoming staff agenda. I am happy to note that one of our members recently led a person to Jesus while counseling them at Gateway.

In terms of measuring progress, our Leadership Council is currently taking a thorough look at how we track goals in all our ministries. Please be in prayer for us as we engage this topic over the next few months.

7. What has happened to our relationship in Rwanda? I can understand not having Rwanda on the next cycle, but I hope we will go back soon. My main concern is our particular relationship with Gikomero Parish and Shyogwe Diocese. We never seem to hear about them. What are their needs.

How can we support Gikomero? Communicating with them, praying specifically for their needs? As a two time traveler to Gikomero it seems like we have no real relationship with them anymore.

We are still in relationship with Rwanda but lack a point person to communicate with them and keep the relationship current. Teresa Kincaid, who is now serving as a deacon at Redeemer, was very invested in leading and maintaining our relationship. Currently we are exploring the possibility of hosting a Rwandan student and sponsoring them through a two year seminary program at Southeastern. We are still in the early stages, although the student has made application to the seminary.

8. You mentioned that leadership was considering different discipleship for different stages of adulthood. Can any additional details be provided regarding how the stages would be divided?

Great question. We have not yet started the *adult discipleship map* team so I do not have a clear picture yet for how to divide the ages/stages of adulthood. Determination of those ages/stages would definitely be under the purview of the team that will design this map.

Thank you all for these questions. I am always happy to entertain further comments and questions through email or appointments. To schedule an appointment, call the church at (919) 782-0550, and speak with my assistant, Marsha Whyte. You can email her at marsha@apostles-raleigh.org or me at patrick@apostles-raleigh.org

With you in Christ,

Patrick