

## DECEMBER 2017

Hello dear friends! May our Lord bless you and keep you as we move into the holy seasons of Advent and Christmas.

Our purpose continues to be - - to make disciples for Jesus Christ who are life-long learners and who influence others to serve for the transformation of the world.

### **Enter: Pastor Dean Nguyen and his spouse, Betty Dang**

Dean and Betty are leading a Vietnamese Christian Church in northern Virginia and they have received a call to form a new church in Henrico where there are a growing number of Vietnamese residents (3000+). An informal visit in my office revealed that they believed God had led them to Skipwith United Methodist Church to inquire of the possibility of renting space and time in our building to begin this new Vietnamese Christian Church.

In the relatively short time I have served as your pastor, the Skipwith Church family has extended a depth of Christian hospitality to me and my family that has made an indelible mark on us. Prior to being appointed here I had heard from a variety of sources that “hospitality” was one of your prominent Christian characteristics . . . and what a gift it is!

This *mindfulness* of others, wanting to help folks feel accepted and find a way to belong is part of our church’s DNA. It’s growing evermore a distinct piece of our ethos. I’ve grown in both my understanding of and practice of hospitality by serving along side you, and, as you know, I have avidly sought to nurture its genuineness and pervasiveness.

Even so, I wasn’t certain just how the idea of renting space and time to a fledgling church of another ethnicity would be received. Yet, after visiting together and praying for the Holy Spirit’s further guidance, I agreed to present the possibility of this new partnership to our Leadership Council during our regular meeting on November 12 (2017).

With very little hesitation and a few questions, thirteen leaders (all in attendance) unanimously decided to pursue the partnership! WOW! To God be all glory, honor and praise!

We are only in the preliminary stage of fleshing out an agreement but we’re on our way. I request that each of you *actively pray* . . . and by that I mean, speak words of grace, be intentionally present, and choose to be positive as we add another building block in our commitment “to make disciples of Jesus Christ.”

FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD,

~ PASTOR TODD