

**October 2017**

*Applause!*

*For the applause of whom do you live? Some live for praise from their spouse. Others live for the approval or recognition from parents or children. Some are motivated most by their circle of friends or co-workers. The famous tend to live for the praise from the crowds.*

***John 12:43 says, "For they loved human praise more than praise from God."***

*A few, however, live for God. The only way to grasp the generous life is to live for the One who gave you life as a gift to be enjoyed and shared.*

**(form a 9/7/17 devotional provided by the UM Foundation)**

Long before I was appointed to serve as your pastor, a core group of our church family had been praying diligently for God to reveal His will and purpose for Skipwith church - "nothing more, nothing less and nothing else" (a la Bishop Young Jin Cho). During our first worship experience together, I revealed to you that I, too, had been concentrating my prayers around this phrase. Neither you nor I knew the other was doing this ahead of our first worship gathering. Somehow, it didn't come up during the "meet the pastor" visit, which seems odd. Yet I'm learning to trust God's timing more and more because the impact of God's confirmation as we worshipped was surreal and palpable!

We knew then, and we have continued to discover, that God is moving mightily in our midst—as individuals and as a fellowship. He is healing our hearts, feeding our souls and inspiring a vital discipleship! We are going about the living of each day with this thought more at the forefront of our minds, "Should Jesus choose to return today, I want him to find me living faithfully as his disciple."

Bishop Charma Lewis' vision for the churches of the Virginia Conference is for each to have a clear and careful plan for teaching and equipping people to live as disciples of Jesus Christ by 2020. Our District Superintendent, Peter Moon, is asking each church in the Richmond District to present evidence that we're making progress toward this vision at this year's Charge Conference (Oct. 1, 3:00 pm at Huguenot UMC).

The "working" plan is as follows:

**A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**  
**FOR**  
**MAKING DISCIPLES FOR JESUS CHRIST**

***Teaching people to seek God's will as revealed in Jesus Christ...***

***... Nothing more - Nothing less - Nothing else!***

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**Sunday School – will identify a curriculum that teaches Christian discipleship**

**Bible Studies – with emphasis on Christian discipleship**

**Nurture & Expand Relationship with Skipwith Elementary School**

**Joint Mission Project – “Rise Against Hunger”**

**Backpack Families – Holding events to build relationships**

**Reading Buddies & Tutoring**

**Intentional Follow-up with Guests**

**Hold 2-3 “New Disciples” events for church membership**

**Connect Guests to a “member sponsor”**

**Attend Five Talent Academy Training –**

**“Structuring Your Church for Evangelism”**

**Hold a Stewardship Education Event – Financial Peace University (short-term) or**

**“Momentum” program (on-going) <Dave Ramsey>**

Once again, ***this is a work in progress!*** It underscores the purpose for which we were called into being as the Church:

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit , and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you...” (Matthew 28:19-20) I want to be a generous pastor who leads a generous church who diligently makes disciples for Jesus Christ to transform this world. Why? So that God will smile approvingly! (applause)

~ PASTOR TODD