

Harvest Ridge Covenant Church
Town Hall Meeting Notes
August 28th, 2011

Approximately 45 members of the congregation gathered on August 28th for a Town Hall-style meeting to discuss the direction of our congregation. The meeting was not an official meeting and no votes were taken. These notes are for informational purposes only.

The youth provided a nacho bar dinner prior to the meeting to raise funds for CHIC and other activities.

Welcome and Prayer

Ken Schroeder, LT chairman, introduced the agenda and discussed the purpose of the meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to “share.” All were to share what God has been doing in and through HRCC, the LT would share what plans/projects they have been working on, and all would share their vision for HRCC. Ken opened the meeting in prayer.

God at Work at HRCC

Jan Brownson led this portion of the meeting. Congregation members answered the question: “Where have you God working in and through HRCC?” Items shared included the following:

- The last Knit One, Pray Too meeting attendance exceeded expectations; ages ranged from grade school age and up; many were from outside the congregation.
- Approximately 15 leaders from Harvest Ridge attended the two-day Willow Creek Leadership Summit in August. Participants were excited about the opportunities at HRCC.
- Innovative solutions to property-related dilemmas; such as Chris Bruntz involvement with the parking lot repairs.
- Karyn Winters’ leadership of the young children’s music program has brought much joy and excitement.
- Merlin shared his opportunity to hand out one of the cards with directions to the church on the very day the cards were received.
- Jed and Heidi have been overwhelmed with the generosity of Harvest Ridger’s in their move and house repair projects.

Jan closed this portion of the session in prayer.

Leadership Team Update

Heather Lennard updated the congregation on various projects the LT has been working on. These include:

- Ministry Team Effectiveness – Each ministry team leader has a liaison on the Leadership Team. Ministry teams have been working on charters and status update reports. This provides focus and direction as well as accountability. The ministry team leaders have been meeting quarterly with the leadership team to share and develop the vision for HRCC. This also allows the leaders to partner with each other on projects.

- Unity and Communication – The leadership team has been working on developing unity and communication among themselves and the congregation. This past month they met twice, including time to study a book about effective leadership. The LT has started having ministry team meetings quarterly and Town Hall meetings every 3-4 months to communicate about activities at Harvest Ridge as well as to listen.
- Future plans for the LT – The LT is developing a plan to work with the nominating committee on recruiting the right people with the right skill into the right positions. They are also planning to continue developing the relationships with the ministry team leaders, allowing for encouragement and accountability. They are also working on developing the Vision for Harvest Ridge. This is a long process and a new stage of ministry for Harvest Ridge.

Financial Review

Ken shared that Harvest Ridge has spent \$9,100 more than has been given in offerings for the first seven months of 2011. However, there have been some bright spots. He pointed out that giving for 2011 has actually exceeded the same period in 2010 by \$14,000. Our attendance has been on average 170 per week for 2011. At the same point in 2010, the average attendance was 150 per week. In order to meet our budgeted expenses, we need to have attendance exceed 190 persons per week. We currently have a \$30,000 cushion in the general fund.

The Capital Fund drive has brought in approximately \$14,000. Plans for this money include: fixing the parking lot, patching and cleaning carpet, a newer color copier for the office and working on better signage for the church.

Leadership Q & A

The leadership team along with the pastors gathered at the front of the room for a question and answer session. Questions and answers included the following:

- When will we update the directory? Jed is putting together a committee to complete this project this fall. The new color copier will aid in this and will enable the office to keep it updated.
- Would the staff encourage everyone to put both first and last names on nametags so we could get to know each other. Jed expressed his willingness to promote this idea. He encouraged everyone to introduce themselves to new people every week.
- Someone asked for an update on small groups. Jack Davis, ministry team leader for Core Groups, shared that last year there were approximately 70-80 people involved in Core Groups. Currently 120 people are involved in small groups. He has been working closely with the Connections Team to plug new people into groups. Tom and Misty Knapp have recently joined his team to help with this.
- A question was asked about the new arrangement of the chairs and the removal of the platform. Jed indicated that in this season of change, we were open to trying new floor plans to facilitate worship. This may necessitate additional ushers to handle the needs. Steve and Mary Davis have recently taken over the duties as head usher from Nate Lennard. The removal of the platform enables the speaker to be closer to the congregation.

- What is the plan for advertising in the community? Jed reminded the congregation that personal invitation is always the most effective method. He encouraged us to use the new “Merlin’s cards” to hand to people who we thought might be interested. The staff has been collecting information from other churches in the area about what might be effective. Our approach is slow and methodical. We are trying to determine who we are and extending that to the community. We are also working on improving signage to improve visibility from the street.
- A question was asked about a list that Jan Brownson with the aid of others in the congregation had compiled about where people are plugged in at HRCC. At some point this list may be made available on the website.

Vision Casting Roundtable Discussion

Ted Richmond led the roundtable discussion. Harvest Ridge would like to be an integral part of the community meeting needs and encouraging others. Ted asked us to consider the following three questions.:

1. Who is HRCC? What are our characteristics?
2. What are the greatest needs of the community?
3. What are HRCC’s greatest gifts to meet these needs?

Jed prayed for the discussion. We then broke up into groups of 10-12 to discuss these questions. We reconvened after 25 minutes to share our answers.

Who is HRCC? What are our characteristics?

- We are loving and caring, helping those in need.
- We are open, welcoming and generous.
- We follow Christ and are Bible-centered.
- Our youth program and youth pastor Mark Peterson engage the youth of the community.
- We have a good location.
- It is easy to plug into ministries at HRCC.
- We are multi-generational.

What are the greatest needs of the community?

- It was mentioned that we need breakthrough mask to find out the true needs of others.
- Unemployment
- Financial Hardship
- Financial issues/poverty (even in our affluent community)
- Brokenness/Alcohol/Depression
- Family issues and childcare
- It is a relatively young community that needs a place to connect.
- Christ and ways to get to know him.
- A place to feel safe/at home.

What are HRCC’s greatest gifts to meet these needs?

- Technology-based communications, such as the website.

- Invite groups such as the scouts to utilize our facility.
- Contact schools and meet needs there. Volunteer time for projects at the schools/adopt a family.
- Utilize Shawnee Community Service to plug into projects.
- Contact the police department to find areas we can serve.
- Praying for God's will in our choices of what to get involved in.
- Programs such as Financial Peace, Alpha, Mother's Day Out
- Individual help, based on skills. Example: Ted Richmond has offered to help people with resumes.

Meeting Evaluation

Bill Taylor, LT Vice-chairman led this part of the meeting. What went well? What can we improve upon in future meetings?

- The participants thought the meeting was well organized.
- Many appreciated the small break out groups that allowed more participation.
- Encourage more members of the congregation to attend these meetings.
- Encourage MS and HS to participate in these meetings.
- It was suggested that we could have a future meeting directly after church which might allow more to attend.

Closing and Prayer

After thanking everyone for their attendance and feedback, Bill closed the meeting in prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Myers