

Bridgeway Community Church
Series: State of the Church
Conversation led by Dr. David Anderson
January 31, 2021

State of the Church part 2

Conversation with Clergy Team on the state of OUR church, Bridgeway Community Church

The state of our church is strong and stretching.

Spiritual growth is not just someone teaching you but it's also you diving into the word yourself. You've got to exercise your own faith.

Bridgeway as a church has been exercising its faith

- by giving - get in on it!

Bridgeway is strong in our resolve to continue ministry amid the pandemic. We never stopped ministry.

- baptisms, baby dedications, funerals sadly, notes, visits, thousands of pounds of food given to the community
- prior to COVID we would have 2000-2500 devices that watched our services. Now it is 5000-8000 devices, possibly 12000 people in total, watching our services.
- utilizing our staff and our ministers. Our ministers have been working day in and day out: Bible studies, teachings, gatherings, Zoom meetings, visits, they have been involved together as well as separately as teams.
- we've hired 4 or 5 people during the pandemic to minister to you and to one another
- our offerings are over 100% of the offering goal as an average over the last 47 weeks

- Senior pastor David Anderson did not take a summer sabbatical because this is not a time to be away but a time to press in. This is true for all our clergy and staff.

We are being stretched.

- you have to think differently, you have to rest differently, you have to organize your schedule differently
- for example, Senior Pastor David is preaching during the week, posts, writings, interviews, connections about the social unrest that he has never done before, Bible studies on Sunday nights

We are strong and we are stretching.

Yet some people are discombobulated, dissonance, in dis-ease. Am I depressed? Am I tired? Some go from excitement and exuberance to exhaustion and tiredness.

Pastor David's word for Bridgeway: HOLD ON

Press on, yes, but HOLD ON

Pray on, yes, but HOLD ON

This year we ordained 3 pastors

Pastor William Jin for the care ministry - he actually cares!

Pastor David Heiliger - pastor of multicultural bridge building

- how to help different sides understand one another
- crafted/edited/wrote the Gracism Creed for racial healing

www.bridgeway.cc/gracism-creed/

Have you signed the Gracism Creed? Why not?

the Creed is a good check for what we write, post and say.

Pastor Sandy Pope

- first female pastor at Bridgeway

These pastors are diverse: Korean, White, African-American

A concern Pastor David has is for our volunteers who have served at Bridgeway in the past.

- some people grow through serving

- Martha wasn't wrong because she was a hard worker. Martha was wrong because she was doing her hard work at the wrong time. She had failed to prioritize Jesus. But if we're not careful, we'll worship the inner Mary inside of us as if that's what Christianity is all about. The inner Mary is being present with the Lord, sitting at his feet, hearing his voice through prayer and through the reading of Scripture. No doubt about it.

Luke 10:38-42

As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. ³⁹ She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. ⁴⁰ But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!"

⁴¹ "Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, ⁴² but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."

Jesus did the miracle, but he made the disciples do the work! He knew that participation was a part of discipleship. Discipleship is not just what you take in, its what you give out.

John 6:5-13

When Jesus looked up and saw a great crowd coming toward him, he said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?" ⁶ He asked this only to test him, for he already had in mind what he was going to do.

⁷ Philip answered him, "It would take more than half a year's wages to buy enough bread for each one to have a bite!"

⁸ Another of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up, ⁹ "Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?"

¹⁰ Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." There was plenty of grass in that place, and they sat down (about five thousand men were there). ¹¹ Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish.

¹² When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, "Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted." ¹³ So they gathered them and filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten.

We need to honor the people who have been hard workers who are without a job right now, without a ministry. Some peoples' faith grow not simply by attending things but actually doing things.

There are some people whose ministry has been taken away from them, and is a point of grieving for them.

We just want you to know - YOU ARE NOT FORGOTTEN. WE MISS YOU.

CLERGY RESPONSE

Tracey Tiernan: It was great just hearing all the names you read Pastor David.

What are the names of the servant within our church that you know and miss?

What does Pastor David miss? Altar calls!

Dave Michener: Martha didn't do anything wrong! There are some outreach projects coming up, so check out the Church Center app and pay attention to our FaceBook community page as well.

Columbia campus: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/151324215476331>

Owings Mills/Reisterstown campus:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2073097136251567>

BridgeKids: their are kits that parents get to pick up that help them engage with the services on Sunday:

bridgeway.cc/kids

Gary Coiro: Thanks for affirming those who can't serve right now.

Mark 10:45

[Jesus speaking] For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

Luke 9:51

As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem.

Isaiah 50:7

Because the Sovereign Lord helps me, I will not be disgraced. Therefore have I set my face like flint, and I know I will not be put to shame.

Gary Coiro: My encouragement to people is to prayerfully think about how you can be a redemptive presence in your own neighborhood, try to serve someone in your community. The second half of our mission is to build bridges to our community not just as a church but individually too.

Scott Garber: As we continue to focus on making our church more Phygital - Physical and Digital - we need to continue to make sure we are intentional about being multicultural in our REAL lives, not just our DIGITAL lives online.

Dave Michener: The church is about people.

Artist: AVB

Song: 4 U Can't Go 2 Church

Album: What's Your Tag Say?

You can't go to church as some people say
The common terminology we use everyday
You can go to chapel, you can sit on a pew
But you can't go to church 'cause the church is you

Steve Hardnett: The church is alive!

John 14:12

[Jesus speaking] **Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.**

With this COVID experience we see the church going further and wider and greater than it has done in the history of the church. More people are being reached by the gospel now through Zoom and through the internet and through social media and TV than has in the 2000 years of the church. The church is growing and is still alive.

Jared Sorber: The people behind the cameras that you don't see every week working hard to bring you Sunday services: Dante, Larry, Dee, Tori, Johnette, Alex, David. Pouring so much energy and time to create the services. The great thing is you can share them and watch them over and over again.

Pastor David Anderson: PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

1. Open Door

Colossians 4:2-3

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.

³ And pray for us, too, that God may **open a door** for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains.

During this season, pray that God would give you an open door to share Jesus. Copy and paste links from our FaceBook and YouTube pages. This is an opportunity for you to be really thinking through when God opens the door, how are you going to step through it?

2. Opportunities

Colossians 4:4-5

Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. ⁵ Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every **opportunity**.

When God presents you with opportunities, make the most of them.

How do you make the most of an opportunity? By preparing before it comes. When preparation and opportunity meet, that is the moment of great success.

Pray now for open doors. Prepare when the opportunity comes, you can step into it.

3. Open Eyes

Praying that God would open the eyes of people who have been deluded through everything that is going on in our culture.

In our national pledge of allegiance there is the line “with liberty and justice for all.” You need both - Social Justice that seems so democratic and Liberty that seems to be so much about freedom and individual responsibility.

But our hope is not even in the pledge of allegiance to our flag. Our freedom comes because of our allegiance to our creator, our redeemer and our king.

But there are false prophets that a lot of believers who have bought into these conspiracy theories that often and always blame people of color and immigrants. The scapegoats have been the poor, people of color, immigrants, the Jews, the gays, etc.

If we're going to follow Jesus, then we cannot believe conspiracy theories. There is a spiritual component to all of this that I don't want you to miss. I believe that the prince of the power of the air and the spirit of delusion that the Scriptures talk about is all in the mix.

Isaiah 44:24-25

This is what the Lord says—your Redeemer, who formed you in the womb: I am the Lord, the Maker of all things, who stretches out the heavens, who spreads out the earth by myself, ²⁵ who foils the signs of false prophets and makes fools of diviners, who overthrows the learning of the wise and turns it into nonsense

Pray for open eyes that God would show those who have been deluded in the name of Jesus, that he will open their eyes that they would see what they are believing is not Bible but false prophecy, diviners and that he would expose it for the nonsense that it is.