

Bridgeway Community Church
Dr. David Anderson
June 13, 2021

End of the Year Clergy Wrap Up 2021

Ministry theme this year: Stay in F.O.C.U.S. - Followers of Christ United in the Spirit

Ephesians 4:3
Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace

Question: Have you been able to stay in focus this year?

John 17:11 NIV
I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, **so that they may be one as we are one.**

PIVOT

There are a few highlights that I would like to note from this last year that has caused us as a nation and church to pivot.

- Pivoting can mean to “turn or rotate, like a hinge.”
- Besides the definition to swivel, pivot can mean “the one central thing that something depends on.”
- E.G. In basketball, pivoting is making a rotation, swivel or turn in direction while keeping one foot planted.

In a sense we as a church (and many in the Big C Church, meaning Christianity) had to “pivot” when it came to worship services and the delivery of church ministry in a way that the body of Christ could still function and be vibrant WITHOUT LOSING IT’S **TRUE HINGE; ITS PLANTED FOOT; IT’S ONE CENTRAL THING!**

Question: What is your hinge?

If you are not clear on what your hinge is; what your planted foot position is; what your one central thing is, then you can be blown away by the winds of change and find yourself unstable with no solid footing.

- Bridgeway, we know what our hinge is.
- We know what our planted foot position is.
- We know what our one central thing is.
- We know what our purpose is!
- ***“To build into one another as we build bridges to our community!”***
- This IS our mission!
- We seek to accomplish this mission in pursuit of our vision ***“to be a multicultural body of fully devoted followers of Christ who are moving forward in unity and love to reach our community, our culture and our world for Jesus Christ.”***
- But METHODS need to change, be different

A Lot of churches, businesses, and organizations had to define or redefine their “pivoting positions” due to the pandemic.

In person church attendance dropped 60% while online attendance tripled in numbers.

More than 100,000 small businesses closed their doors because of the pandemic by October 2020.

For many of you, you learned personally about the importance & strength of family; or the lack thereof

Some of you learned the importance & strength of your faith; or the lack thereof

Some of you learned the importance & strength of your business model; your technological/digital flexibility, and your financial habits.

Question: What do you do when God calls you to pivot?

Some of you even gained money that you didn't realize you had because you weren't getting hair cuts, manicures, pedicures, eating out, regularly frequenting Starbucks, Dunkin' donuts, or other daily fixes that were siphoning away your money on a regular basis.

"A lot of people are looking at their priorities and changing and thinking through 'now what does my post-pandemic life look like? What does my post-pandemic faith look like?'"

"Some people are more connected to their policies than the person of Jesus."

Question: "How do we live out Followers of Christ who are trying to maintain the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace?"

At Bridgeway, while we saved money on building expenses, we shifted our ministry to become premiere in our technological/digital communication.

- We pivoted, not on a DIME, but on a DECLARATION that:

***"The Church is the people, not the building;
and ministry is still open, not closed!"***

And we did ministry like never before!

We hung in there and lived out our mission as a church through the pandemic.

I just want to thank all of you who have served, given, prayed, encouraged and helped us be the church God has called us to be...in good times and in challenging times.

The Columbia campus building future-fitting renovations:

- We need \$500k in 5 weeks in order to pay for our phase one "inside" renovations.

- It is **\$2.5M** project for phase 1.
- Because of your giving and our good stewardship, **we had saved \$2M already.**
- **We just needed \$500k more in order for Phase 1 to be completely debt free, and you came through in December like a charm!**
- **You didn't give \$500k; You gave \$750k! (not in pledges! IN cold hard CASH!**
- **THANK YOU!!**

We should be done with Phase 1 by Fall.

- We will open the **Columbia campus for our vision Sunday, September 12th!**
- We will start ***Phase 2 in the Fall*** and will need **another \$2.5M** to complete it by next summer 2022, which is **our 30th year of ministry!**
- We are asking God to provide all that we need in order to complete this project and we are saving every dollar we can **before we come to you in the fall to ask you to help us cross this finish line.**

So, stay tuned!

- We did all of this “***above and beyond***” our regular tithes and offerings!!
- Before I call our clergy to the stage, **can I tell you about your giving?**
- In fact, here are the numbers for our regular tithes and offerings.
- **May 2021 - 99.4%**
- **Covid Era (March 2020 - June 2021) - 99.7%**
- **Fiscal Year to date (July 2020 to June 2021) - 100.3%**

I would like to invite our clergy team to the stage now.

CLERGY CONVERSATION

A LOOK BACK

1. As you reflect on our past ministry year, what are a couple ministry highlights, stories, learnings, or encounters that you and/or others have experienced?

Ronald Green - the music ministry has actually flourished during COVID. When you come back, you won't even recognize the music ministry; it won't be like it was before. God has really worked IN us as we have had to pivot into a new way of doing ministry.

Gary Coiro - I experienced pivot as well this year. The MISSION didn't change, the MESSAGE didn't change but the METHODS certainly did. We couldn't do our normal baptism services but we had people who wanted to be fully devoted followers of Christ and obey/follow him in baptism. So we went to the Patapsco River, Centennial lake or a hot tub somewhere! I learned that a crisis can provoke creativity. Also ministry didn't stop in a small group I lead on Friday mornings at 6:30am. When we met in person we would have about 12 guys show up. Now that we have gone virtual, we have doubled that number and practice the one anothers in new ways.

Dave Michener - this year the ministry ministered to the minister - me. It started as a group of 3 or 4 guys who wanted to just check in with one another and then said, 'let's do this again!' Now we have 24-36 guys each week for only 30 minutes on Wednesday afternoons. The pain of my own personal life tenderized my heart and a challenge from pastor DA helped me to step into a better pastor.

William Jin - I learned what pivot means this ministry year when I visited a woman from Bridgeway who had been in an auto accident during the Christmas holiday. When I got to her room, she was all alone. All the verses and prayers I was thinking about sharing went right out the window. I told her that Pastor Anderson sent me to visit her she started crying. Then I started crying. I did pray with her and it was hard to leave that room. The church is about people and I was reminded of that.

2. Was there a time over the past ministry year where a particular sermon or scripture encouraged you?

Sandy Pope - 1 Peter 3:15 ESV:

but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect

The hope that we have is found in Christ Jesus. My hope for our church is that people see that our hope is Christ. But we have to be ready to give a reason or a defense for the hope that we have. To sit down and hear where someone else is coming from and then be able to tell them about the hope we have. And being responsive to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. Lets us our actions and our words to share the hope that we have and the reason we have it.

David Heiiger - The passage that you shared in the beginning where our ministry theme comes from [Ephesians 4:3]. The verse right before it says:

Ephesians 4:2 NIV

Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.

A lot of the stories we are hearing today are about bearing with one another. If you are like me, there are things that happened this year where you needed someone to come along side of you and help bear that burden. We have seen our church do that this year. To proactively look for opportunities to help others bear what is happening in their life. For me personally the Gracism Roundtable during last summer during the height of the racial tensions. We saw and experienced the Bridgeway body come together and help bear the pain of others during all that unrest. Over 17 thousand people engaged with our Gracism Roundtable discussion.

Steve Hardnett - the message pastor DA shared about the disciples being afraid in the boat and how Jesus got up and calmed the storm. But what really impacted me was it wasn't just the believers in the boat that were saved, but the unbelievers that were around their boat was also saved. And it gave me a different perspective that not only was I grateful that for the vaccination for me and my family, but for everyone else in our nation that were also saved. The mercy of God is there to show that God loves everybody! God wants to heal anyone who would come.

3. As you think about our theme -**Stay in FOCUS** - *Followers of Christ United in the Spirit* - was there a particular time when the theme inspired you to act or respond in a particular manner?

Jared Sorber - I saw unity with our missionary partners when we would get together online from Peru, Mexico, Kenya, etc. as well as Bridgeway attenders and the encouragement they received from one another and the unity that expressed.

Ronald Green - There have been some difficult things in my life as well as other members of the worship ministry and I have experienced and seen the family of Bridgeway show up in the unity of the Spirit like I have never seen before. God has shown up not just through his Spirit but through his people.

LOOKING AHEAD

4. As the summer approaches, what WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT would you give our congregation and/or what summer plan or PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS can they apply in the next few summer months?

Dan Taylor - the word I would use the most for this summer is be INTENTIONAL. What do you want to see in your life by the end of the summer and how do you intentionally engage your life to do it. Whether that is a better prayer life, or reading through the gospels or even physically getting into a healthier state for God's glory, those will only happen if you are intentional about it so you can actually be a different person by the end of the summer.

Practical Application: **bridgeway.cc** on the home page of Bridgeway's website is a link for a Summer Reading Plan that has a Bible reading plan for the summer as well as some suggestions for books for summer reading.

Tracey Tiernan Coiro - Many times we see the summer as a time to escape. I am going to have fun and get away from the burden of my life! I think we have had enough escapism during this pandemic and people have used all kinds of things to cope with during the pandemic. Instead of more escape, think about:

Question: What do I want my spiritual life to look like?

Investing your time/life into your relationship with Jesus is the most important thing you will ever do. You can't have a connected relationship with God by just doing your own thing. You need the word of God. Get your butts back in church. He is waiting. He loves you like crazy. His arms are open wide.

Eli Hernandez - What comes to my mind is prayer. I believe because of what we have been through, people's hearts are more open. Even if you don't know what to say, just

tell him what's in your heart. Even if it is an R rated version! It's not like you'll surprise him, he already knows it. Just take the time to express it to him. If you seek him, you will find him. He is reaching out his hand, his heart and his life to you and to all of us in this season.