



December, 2007

“If you want to arrange it This world you can change it If we could somehow make this Christmas thing last...

By helping a neighbour Or even a stranger And to know who needs help You need only to ask”

From the Song: Old City Bar by Trans-Siberian Orchestra, Atlantic Recording Corp., 1996.

By the time of most of our congregational annual meetings arrive, Christmas will be a memory; but we are to be a people who continue to live out the “Christmas thing...” and make it last! This fits well with our (ECCC) desire to “live fully into our Kingdom priorities and potential”. Just let your mind wander a bit at the possibility of 25 congregations of various sizes all taking a passionate interest in a Kingdom perspective and doing the best possible to bring Christmas hope to the situation. Beyond that, think about some 3000 individuals who attend the ECCC each reaching out to neighbours and strangers who need help; can you begin to see the world looking different than it does today?

The past year was a year of significant transition with the closure of Covenant Bible College. After a 66 year season of ministry that particular expression of discipleship has concluded. Gratefully, the commitment to pursue creative and authentic ways to encourage and equip folks to follow Jesus is every bit as strong as it has been in the past. The specifics of the future are not clear but the commitment to a new chapter of discipleship is crystal clear. I trust that your congregation has utilized this time of transition to ask what following Jesus means in new and fresh ways.

Discussion about the future has brought one concept into increasing clarity; intentional community. One of our values is to be a connectional church (along with the other three of being missional, devotional and biblical). My prayer for each local congregation is that they experience growing community. It is also my prayer that as we continue to grow in geographic locations (now as far east as Gatineau, Quebec) that we will become even more intentional in our commitment to community within the ECCC. This can be a unique dimension that our church family brings to the body of Christ. What may this mean for your congregation? We really aren’t a “top down” organization and I find it exciting to see our individual congregations pursuing an ever increasing level of Kingdom ministry.

I want to conclude by expressing gratitude for the part your congregation has in the big picture of seeking to live into our Kingdom priorities and potential. Thank you for the leadership you share with our common mission and ministry. Thank you for presenting the wider work of the Covenant in your local setting. Thank you for financially supporting the work we do together as a community of congregations. I speak not only for myself but also for the leadership team of the Evangelical Covenant Church of Canada.

For the Kingdom and for the King,

Jeff Anderson