

Hi CAC Family!

I'm not really sure how to start this letter. I have so much I want to say but have to try to organize my thoughts so there is some direction to my ramblings! These thoughts came to me at 3:30 AM this morning as I was listening to some worship music and having my quiet time. So here goes...

Three years ago, I partially retired. I guess more accurately, God "made" me retire through a number of circumstances. Many of you know the entire story but I'll spare all the details at this time. I went from working 80 hrs a week to 30 hours a week. I thought I would have all this time to garden and work in the yard and spend time with my family and do what I never got to do when I was so busy.

Little did I know that there were going to be a lot of changes in the church that would require a lot of my time! God knew! This was definitely a God thing because if I had been working my usual crazy hours, I would not have been able to do what the church needed to get done because of all the transitions.

In the process of doing "church work," I have come to realize that I feel so much more fulfilled and excited about my church work than my occupational work! Hmm...is God trying to tell me something?

Don't get me wrong, I have loved the wonderful 34-year career he gave me in the medical field but there is something different about being busy with God's eternal work. It is something that really moves my heart. It's hard to explain.

I love writing the Elder's Newsletter. I love the PEAK process and what we are learning about ourselves and our community. I'm not used to the slower pace but God has a purpose for that. I love dreaming about what God has in store for Canby Alliance Church and for our community! I love seeing a person's spiritual curiosity. I believe it shows God is at work in that person's life. I love seeing people finding new beginnings with their life in Christ.

I love spending time sitting at Jesus's feet enjoying him and hearing from him through his Word. I love listening to worship songs that reflect things that deal with eternity. I get excited about letting the Holy Spirit speak to me. I get excited about what God is going to teach me each day. Sadly, even at my age, I have so much more to learn.

After much praying, seeking God, and listening to the Holy Spirit (and my wonderful wife!), I have decided that it is time for me to fully retire after 11/2024 and I decided that I wanted to "work" for the church which simply means, I want to volunteer to be available to my church, my church family, our pastoral staff and, ultimately, our community to help in whatever way I can.

What do I attribute these heart changes to? Spending time in the Bible especially since the Bible is God's way of communicating to me and teaching me about him. Spending time in prayer, talking to Him about everything and anything but especially what is most heavy on my heart. Allowing the Holy Spirit to speak to me. Developing spiritually sensitive eyes and ears and hearts. Spending time with neighbors, friends, building bridges, loving people. Investing in the church which God dearly loves. Asking God to give me a more eternal perspective on life and time and people. Asking God to teach me what it means to have one pearl of great price rather than half a dozen pearls of great price.

These are things that I know but it has always been a challenge to put into practice. It's almost like accepting Jesus again for the first time.

So that is what's been on my heart lately and I just wanted to share it with all of you just in case it can help someone else to experience this greater fullness of life I've experienced. I pray that it will make a difference for someone.

I wanted to share a link to my reading to the Bible in a year with Nicky Gumble, day #296: <https://bioy.app/en/classic/296> This session was what brought the contents of this newsletter to mind. It is very practical and gives some very good suggestions on how we can be useful to God in his eternal work.

Now, on to the PEAK Team meeting: As a result of our meeting on 10/24/2023, we decided upon the following definitions. When we (Canby Alliance Church) use the terms Leadership or Discipleship or Mission in our discussion, we mean the following:

LEADERSHIP: Leadership: Committed Godly servants who help and inspire others to pursue our mission.

DISCIPLESHIP: Discipleship is an authentic intentional connection for the purpose of passing on a growing relationship with Jesus.

MISSION: Mission is to advance God's kingdom in Canby by welcoming, connecting, loving and serving our neighbors in a relevant way to introduce them to Jesus Christ.

As Sandi Beck said, these definitions are not a "final version" because we are in process and things are evolving and changing as we continue to learn more about us and our community so don't feel like this is not going to change and evolve further.

Here are the remaining sessions:

*November 7 – Impact Session part 1–What is our “Critical Gospel Impact”?
Understanding how this intersects in the context which God has placed us.*

December 5 – Impact Session part 2

January 9 – Story Session–what do we need to know about our church so we can repeat what is good, redeem what needs to be accounted for and restore wounds we have inflicted or received.

January 30 – Map Session–How will we know we are on track? MAP provides a framework to ensure we stay on track with our cardinal directions, CGI and what our story revealed to us.

March 5 – Remember Session–what do we need to remember from our PEAK journey?

Well, I guess the cold weather is here for us to enjoy so get the sweaters out, start up the fire and get the lap blankets out again!

Once again, I want to remind you of who is on the PEAK Team: Dennis Beatty, Brent Beck, Sandi Beck, Nick Charbonnier, Marilyn Greenleaf, Rachel Keen, Lindsey Lessley, Adam Mower, Marlin Myers, Nancy Pickett, Jeff Reister, Jenny Schuening, Joshua Stager, Jim Trigg, Mel Yamase. If at any time something comes to you as you read these newsletters, please feel free to reach out to any of the PEAK Team and let them know what you are thinking.

Thanks again for allowing me to share my heart and my journey. I appreciate being able to serve you as an elder.

Your faithful servants,

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