

THE WAY AHEAD

By Steve Chupp

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The way ahead is based on the fact that God is working out a plan for us.

- For each of us
- For all of us together

In January God filled our church with his promises.

- Many promises were for people, some were for our church.
- They all speak of God's positive future for us.
- **Jeremiah 29:11** *"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."* NIV
- The prophets said these things about our future:
 - Breakthroughs are coming to Zion Chapel.
 - Entrepreneurs - new ways of making money and funding the Kingdom
 - A change is coming to the face of worship - multimedia, change in visuals on stage, etc.
 - Growth of CR - doubling leadership and extending into other states
 - Growth of Zion's attendance - need to return to multiple celebration services
 - Equipping the next generation of leadership
 - People who will influence through intercession, youth ministry, marriage ministry, church planting, gatherers, mentors, builders of infrastructure and web design.

We need to prepare for our tomorrows.

- **Joshua 3:5** *Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do amazing things among you.* NIV
 - We are going after our tomorrows!
- **There are wonders, work, and warfare ahead of us.**
 - We work to prepare for God's wonders.
 - "Let every heart prepare him room."
 - We also will need to do some warfare to ensure these things happen.
 - **1 Corinthians 16:9** *For a great and effective door has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.* NKJV
- We finished last year with a sense of excitement and expectation.
 - We spent the first month seeking God and hearing from him.
 - The stage is set for great things in God.

The way ahead relates to our God-given vision as a church.

- **Zion Chapel Vision: Encountering God, Encouraging One Another, Engaging Our World**

1. **Consistently** Encounter God.

- A God encounter is anytime we **interact** with God in a **meaningful** way.
- **Ephesians 2:18** *It is through Christ that all of us...are able to come in the one Spirit into the presence of the Father.* TEV
- What we began in January must be continued throughout the year.
 - Prayer is the backbone and undergirding of all we do.
 - Pray often, pray more, and pray all the time.
- Worship is where we encounter God as we glorify him.
 - We do this every Sunday, more once a quarter
 - We do this as we daily take time to worship
 - We do this when we offer all of life to God as worship.
- **Romans 12:1**
 - *Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God-this is your spiritual act of worship.* NIV
 - *So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life — your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life — and place it before God as an offering. This is the true worship you should offer.* Msg & TEV

2. **Intentionally** Encourage One Another.

- **Hebrews 10:23-25** *Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another-and all the more as you see the Day approaching.* NIV
 - Encouraging one another involves many activities, including connecting/fellowship, ministry, teaching, and training.
- **Matthew 28:19-20** *Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you.* NLT
- We need a training track for new disciples and those who need the basics.
 - **The working name for our new discipleship track is **The Discovery Path.****
- We would start with a new members' class, then lead people through small group courses like Alpha, *The Purple Book*, Financial Peace University, Peacemaker, and gifts assessment.
 - They would move from making sure they are saved and filled with the Holy Spirit to participating in a gift-oriented ministry.

3. **Strategically** Engage Our World.

- **1 Corinthians 9:19-23** *I have voluntarily become a servant to any and all in order to reach a wide range of people: religious, nonreligious, meticulous moralists, loose-living immoralists, the defeated, the demoralized — whoever. I didn't take on their way of life. I kept my bearings in Christ — but **I entered their world** and tried to experience things from their point of view. I've become just about every sort of servant there is in my attempts to lead those I meet into a God-saved life. I did all this because of the Message. I didn't just want to talk about it; I wanted to be in on it!* Msg
 - **We earn the right to share the Gospel by **serving** our community.**
 - **If we want to win our world for Christ we have to **enter** it!**
- We are developing a **culture of outreach** in our church.

- This culture would be based on regular events and consistent lifestyle.
- Training events will equip us to reach the lost.
- **Key ministry partners** are the doorways to/keys to engaging our community.
 - They are ministries like The Post, Ribbon of Hope, and RETA.
 - They are already connected.
 - They are effective, evangelistic ministries meeting real needs in our community.
 - When we work alongside them, we touch our community.
- **Our building and language** need to connect with our community.
 - That's why we plan on **changing the name of our church** this year.
 - "Zion Chapel" does not help new people identify our church.
 - This has been addressed twice by outside prophets.
 - The elders are agreed to make this change.
 - Pray about and recommend names.
 - We are planning a **facelift for our building**.
 - The platform – lights, curtains, etc.
 - The foyer – 19 year old carpet
 - Create a Coffee Café
 - We are finishing the redecorating of the ARK wing.
- **We are committed to foreign missions for the long haul.**
 - Our current missionaries and new ones
 - Mission trips: To our missionaries – Costa Rica – Go!! Mozambique, Haiti later

4. The way ahead requires good use of our awesome resources.

- **1 Corinthians 4:2** *Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.* NKJV
- Finances
 - **Report by Tim Morningstar, Church Administrator (separate slideshow)**
 - Tim is no longer on paid staff.
 - He has served our church very well over the last six years.
- Staff
 - We are seriously understaffed.
 - We need more pastors and support staff.
 - We are now taking applications for Children's Ministry Administrator.
 - Pick up a job description at the Info Center.
 - While we have ample capital, our weekly income is down.
 - We can't hire the staff we need until the weekly income improves.
 - Tithe to the local storehouse, gifts above tithe specified for other ministries.
- Elders
 - We now have five elders: Myself, Jim Dreier, Phil Bontrager, Don Brubaker, and Ken Holderman
 - We need another elder.
 - Please pray about this and offer names to the current elders.
 - A Ministry Description is available at the Info Center.

- Members
 - Our members are our biggest resource.
 - God has gifted us to do what he called us to do.
 - Our church is elder-led in government but volunteer-led in its ministries.
 - This has mobilized lots of people and kept our budget lower.
 - We have a very high percentage of our people involved in ministry.
 - You also produced some outstanding ministries that are touching our community.
 - MOPS, Celebrate Recovery, Ancient Paths, Alpha...
 - You are to be honored for your investment in God's Kingdom.

The Way Ahead

- Let's go after God's promises for our tomorrows.
 - **Jeremiah 29:11** *"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."* NIV
- Your role is crucial to God's promises.
 - We work and battle as God does wonders.
 - **Joshua 3:5** *Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do amazing things among you.* NIV
- Your commitment to God and our church is a commitment to reaching lost people.
 - The church sometimes tries to withdraw from the world.
 - God is always trying to enter our world – through his people.
 - Let's enter our world to serve and share the Gospel.
 - **Mark 16:15** And then he told them, "Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone, everywhere." NLT
 - Let's go out and engage our world.