“TTT” — The Transition Times
A Monthly Update from the Transitional Leadership Team
of First Baptist Church, Merced, CA

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PRAISE THE LORD “Christmas for the City” touched the lives of some 10,000 people here in Merced. The ice skating rink, children’s play area, concessions and musical performances brought much joy to our city and region. The Prayer Tent was visited and many were prayed for, including a number of children. Several rededicated their lives to Christ!

YEAR-END FINANCES In 2016 God provided for all our financial needs in wonderful ways. Approximately $100,000 came in toward our 2016 Budget during the month of December. So far, January giving is not up to 2017 budget expectations. Let’s all do our part to honor the Lord with the “first fruits” of our increase. This is vitally important as we begin the Pastoral Search Process later in February and for the rest of 2017.

TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP TEAM After serving our congregation so well during the last 14 months, the team concluded its last meeting on January 16th. Please be sure to express your appreciation to Scott Fletcher, Aaron Johnson, Tom Rayl, Steve Terry, Ken Rhoades and Ray Islieb for their faithfulness in leading our church to a place of health and healing. We desire to honor their service at the end of our worship time on February 26th!

VETTING COMMITTEE COMPLETES WORK We are indebted to our Vetting Committee of Jason Tucker, Ron Williams, Dennis Slocum, Mike Tall and Ken Rhoades for their diligence and spiritual guidance in recommending the men who they believed will serve our congregation effectively as Elders. The hours of meetings, phone calls and interviews has paid rich dividends!

ELDER CANDIDATES The five Elder Candidates have given their testimonies to the congregation and we now have until February 12 to engage them individually if we have any concerns or questions about their candidacy for these important roles. If we receive no feedback that requires additional vetting, we are planning to install Scott Fletcher, Aaron Johnson, Paul Glass, Steve Terry and Jerry Shewey as our Council of Elders on February 12th at the close of our worship service. Please be praying for these men as they partner with Dr. John in leading us and securing a new Lead Pastor for us in God’s timing!

ELDER CANDIDATE EQUIPPING Beginning on January 23 and continuing into the coming months, Dr. John will be equipping our new Council of Elders as to their roles, responsibilities and relationships. This completes Stage 3 Renewal in our Strategic Ministry Plan. It also prepares the way for Stage 4 Revitalization and the selection of a Pastoral Search Committee to begin seeking God’s man for First Baptist Church.
PASTORAL SEARCH COMMITTEE  One of the first items on our new Council of Elders agenda will be to appoint a Pastoral Search Committee. Please begin praying right now that the Elders will have the mind of Christ and that the search process can occur in a timely and strategic way for the glory of God.

CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW COMMITTEE  This committee will begin reviewing our entire Constitution and By-laws in light of the amendment the congregation approved concerning our new Council of Elders. The focus will be on clarity, simplicity and accountability. Again, your prayers are greatly needed and appreciated.

LEARNING TO LEAD SEMINAR WITH DR JOHN CONTINUES TODAY  TODAY is the third class in our second leadership module, “The Interpersonal Dimensions of Leadership.” We’ll be focusing on the subject of “Team-Building.” All these sessions are being taped and are also available on our website www.fbcmerced.com  The seminar takes place in the worship center at 9:45 a.m.

LAST ISSUE  This will be the last issue of “The Transition Times.” Beginning in February we will be communicating the mission, vision and direction of the church through a new monthly publication called “Council Collaborations”...updates from the Council of Elders!  The first issue will be available in late February!