Life Center

Lead Pastor Transition Strategy

With both great joy and sorrow, we embark on a journey of transition wherein we will send our Lead Pastors, the founders of our church, on to another task and dimension of responsibility in the Kingdom of God - to be an Executive Pastor at City Bible Church in Portland, OR.

Over the past five years, Derrill & Michal have felt stirring, a growing sense of leading, and the deep wooing of the Holy Spirit. Always falling back on their original plan to live in Lewis County their whole life, they continually suppressed the sense of leading. After many times of prayer & fasting, consultation with various leaders and the Life Center elders, they are now responding to a definite call from God. This will of course, lead them into a new dimension of relationship with Life Center - as a poppa, overseer, and apostolic oversight of the house.

Transition was a regular part of the New Testament model of church-life and it continues at the Lord’s beckoning in today's church:

“Because of God's grace to me, I have laid the foundation like an expert builder. Now others are building on it.” 1 Corinthians 3:10 NLT

“One day as these men were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Dedicate Barnabas and Saul for the special work to which I have called them.” So after more fasting and prayer, the men laid their hands on them and sent them on their way. So Barnabas and Saul were sent out by the Holy Spirit.” Acts 13:2-4a

WHAT THIS TRANSITION IS:

1. This is a response to a call of God upon our lead pastors into another realm of ministry and Kingdom influence

Many offers have come to the Corbins over the years for other jobs, churches, & unique opportunities. But the vision of the Lord for Lewis County overrode those moments. However, something sovereign began to brew over these last five years. In the end, we determined that God had need of their strengths in another field for this particular season. Uniquely enough, Life Center, as their sending church, will be able to partake of the influence that the Corbins will have in their new sphere.

2. This is the beginning of a transition process

New Testament leadership succession, similar to Paul leaving one church to go to another city, is often different than many are familiar with. Derrill will lead this process, and with the elders’ help, will work towards a succession that continues vision in as seamless of manner as possible.

3. This is continuation of the original vision of Life Center into a new volume of history

Allowing plateau or limitation to cap this house would not be an effective witness to the generational transfer God models in His Word. To shift the vision or focus of the house would likewise not model God’s intention for perpetuating His purpose from one age to the next. Life Center MUST contend for vibrant worship, congregational unity, passionate prayer, generations, Holy Spirit presence, five-fold ministry, apostolic influence in the region through campus expansion, and international ministry in Ireland and East Africa... and yes, even beyond. If God is leading us to send Derrill & Michal into a different realm of placement, then He is, without a doubt, going to do something great for Life Center.

WHAT TRANSITION LOOKS LIKE:

1. Pastor Derrill & Michal met with each elder individually and discussed this decision

2. The elders committed to unified prayer and fasting

Life Center is not a democracy - it is a theocracy. This simply means that the church is governed by Christ and that He appoints those who would lead the flock. Because Jesus is in charge, the elders began to confess that He has, and will continue to work through leaders and the people of God to establish His purpose in the earth. This time of prayer for us all has helped us surrender to His leading, and not our own desires.

3. Bill Scheidler came to Centralia this past week for two days and helped the elders set the transition course

Bill has been an apostle to this work from its founding. His 35+ years of experience in church leadership and pastoral transition have proven invaluable. He met with each elder couple, and then the whole team at once. This counsel has helped us chart the course for a successful transition.

4. The congregation is now being informed and we are asking the entire body to rally together in unity

We must purpose not to allow the enemy to divide or bring harm to people or to mar the vision to establish Christ’s rule in Lewis County. Rather, the elders are asking that the church step forward by faith into this transition, believing that God has good in mind for us all.
5. It is the founding pastor’s responsibility to nominate a replacement for himself

Much like Paul placed Timothy and other sons into churches he planted, Derrill is responsible to do the same. The founder initiates the replacement, and the elders confirm the choice after prayerful discussion.

6. A six-month plan of further developing the successor and placing him before the church will ensue

Once the elders ratify a successor, they will set them in as an associate pastor to Derrill and begin the process of three things: observing & learning all aspects of the church, beginning to take responsibility step by step, and eventually fully taking the reigns. At every step, Derrill will be serving as lead pastor and be a coach to the successor. Towards the end of the transition, the membership will have the opportunity to formally receive and confirm the new lead pastor. Hands would then be laid upon them and they would assume the lead pastor role. Derrill will remain on the eldership for at least a year, feed the flock from time to time, and part of all major decisions. This is all part of the legal and spiritual journey modeled to us in scripture and is also laid out in our church constitution.

IMPORTANT APSECTS OF TRANSITION:

1. Sustaining Momentum Together

- We will pray Kingdom-minded prayers that are full of faith & expectation - prayers that focus on the transfer of mantle from one leader to another, the continuance of vision & direction for this house, and the perpetuation of all that God has done among us
- We will pray for our Eldership
- We will continue to read, study & Life Journal together
- We will pray for the next volume of life and ministry in our church
- We will pray for our founding pastors, Derrill & Michal and kids
- We will pray for successors who will shepherd & lead this people

2. Preparing for New Leadership

- We will lift up the hope & vitality of our church
- We will rally to the cause of Christ by stepping into ministry, not out of ministry - we are co-builders of Christ’s church
- We will receive new leadership and allow them grace, time, and support in order to get established

3. Preparing for a Healthy Transition Time between Pastor Derrill & the New Lead Pastor

- The vision, initiatives, and ministries of the church will not stop, but will continue strong

- After a period of deep consideration on the part of the eldership, they will set a New Lead Pastor before the church as an Associate Pastor. This may happen within two weeks time.
- All questions, from any person in the church can be forwarded anytime to any elder - we are happy to talk!
- The Associate Pastor will begin taking on leadership responsibility in stages of 30, 60 & 90 days
- The transition may take as much as six months in which Derrill & Michal will continue to serve as Lead Pastors
- We will officially install our the New Lead Pastor and shift Pastor Derrill’s role in the church from lead pastor to Founding Pastor

4. Preparing to transition Derrill & Michal into their new place of spiritual assignment

- We will assist Pastor Derrill & Michal in finishing strong
- We will celebrate Derrill & Michal’s ministry and our years of walking together with them
- We will outwardly mourn our inner grief in a way that leads to hope & healing
- We will send Derrill & Michal forward with honor for their years of ministry here
- Derrill & Michal will serve as an Executive Pastor at City Bible Church in Portland, OR and continue as Apostolic Leaders in Ministers Fellowship International. In that role, Derrill will oversee the Mill Plain Campus of CBC, be involved in Portland Bible College, write church & leadership materials, and assist churches & teams as needed
- Derrill & Michal will be moving to the Vancouver, WA area in the summer, 2013

THE CORBIN’S PERSONAL COMMITMENT:

1. We are committed to following the Lord and His calling
2. We are committed to the wellbeing of our marriage and our three kids
3. We are committed to unity among our friends, our eldership, and the our church family
4. We are committed to each member of the church finding his/her place of ministry in the call of God
5. We are committed to vibrant, forward-thinking, apostolic ministry in Lewis County
6. We are committed to walk with this house all the days of our lives - while our role in the house is changing, the God-breathed vision for this place still burns in our heart. We will continue to give ourselves to fan it into flame and see it continue to come to reality.