

Pleasant Valley Family,

As a church staff we are ramping up for the fall and know that many of you are doing the same. You are probably in the process of getting your kids all ready for school: new backpacks, new folders, new clothes, new hopes and aspirations. As a kid, I remember being excited about the fall. It was a fresh start, the beginning of something new, yet familiar (with the exception of school work of course).

We are excited for this new season and anticipate great things for your family. We have been praying diligently for God to be at work in the lives of those who will enter the doors of Pleasant Valley. We have also been praying for you and your kids - that this fall will be a time of growing deeper in love with Jesus and your family.

I want to take this time to give you an update on some of the changes that we are excited about for you and your kids this fall. But before I get specific, let me share with you what God has placed on my heart for Pleasant Valley.

We believe that we are in a new season as a church. There are new chapters to be written and God is faithfully turning the pages for us. I spent a great deal of time during my sabbatical asking God to share His heart for PV and the greater Winona area. He was faithful to answer. He led me to Judges 2:10:

"And all that generation also were gathered to their fathers. And there arose another generation after them who did not know the Lord or the work that he had done for Israel."

At first glance, it didn't seem very inspiring to me. In fact, it terrified me. A generation that didn't know the Lord? Then I realized what He was trying to tell me. God was giving us a burden and a vision for all generations. A phrase started to ring in my heart: "Every generation alive in Jesus."

I shared this burden and vision with the Governance Board and they concurred that this indeed was where God was leading. We talked and prayed through the consequences of a generation not knowing the Lord and committed together that this will not happen on our watch.

Our mission statement up until this point has been: ***To Lead others into a life changing relationship through Jesus Christ.*** We will remain deeply committed to this passion and purpose. However, we believe that God is taking us to a new level of focus and vision. Our new mission statement will reflect these convictions:

The mission of Pleasant Valley Church is to see every generation made fully alive in Jesus Christ.

This new focus in mission and vision necessitates some changes to how we are ministering to the next generation. The changes are detailed below and will start on Sunday, September 13.

CHANGES TO SUNDAY MORNING:

- Sunday morning programming for preschool-4th grade will be called, “Kids’ Church.”
 - All kids, preschool through 4th grade, will check in outside of the SMC (Student Ministry Center, which is room 209 on the upper level.)
 - Preschool and K will meet in room 206/208; class is offered during 8:30 & 10:30 services. (Until then, they continue to meet in room 111, on the lower level.)
 - 1st-4th grade have already begun meeting for large group in the SMC. Class is offered during 8:30 & 10:30 services. Beginning September 13, they will also have small groups: grades 1-2 in room 211; grades 3-4 in room 210.
- Middle School (5th-8th grade) will meet in the Chapel (room 203, where 1st-4th used to be). Class will be offered during 8:30 & 10:30 services.
- No High School
- No College

I can already hear you asking the question: Why not have a program for High School and College students on Sunday morning?

As we prayed through this decision, our heart to create a new experience for our older students (high school and college) was front and center. The saying goes that if you do the same things over and over again, you will get the same results. We’re not ok with that. We want our students ready for the next phase in their spiritual journey. We believe that there are several things that will be key to that development.

First, we will be challenging our high school and college students to find a place to serve the younger generations. Serving Jesus and others is always the next step to a deeper relationship. A vision of High school and College students coming alongside our kids and middle school students, encouraging them in their walk with Jesus? Who wouldn’t want to see that? We also knew that students involved in leadership could bring a level of energy and excitement to walking with Jesus that would be contagious to our younger generation.

Second, we believe that one of the best ways to grow as a family is to worship together. This is a big deal to us. When you gather before the Throne of God as a family, great things begin to happen. If you need to adopt a few kids during the service, there are hundreds of college students who are missing their families and would probably love for you to be a second family for them.

Third, we don't want to over program our high school and college students. We would rather give them an incredible mid-week experience that encourages them to bring their friends and provides an experience that is geared to their life stage.

Finally, we want to give our younger kids the best space available on Sunday mornings. We are going all in to make our kids program more dynamic with live worship and age appropriate small groups. We believe that this will not only serve our current attendees, but also draw in the community.

We want to see EVERY GENERATION MADE ALIVE IN JESUS. We are committed to that and believe that these changes will be a great first step to fulfilling that vision.

We look forward to hearing stories of how God is making you and your family more and more alive in Jesus!

Journeying with you,

Brandon Zieske