

February 19, 2012

West Valley Church is a growing and healthy church! We are growing larger and stronger with each week as we worship together, share meals together, pray for each other, and are caring for each other. We share God's Word, and our lives, together in Community Groups, Growth Groups, Foundations classes and Bible Studies. Since adding our second worship service, we now average over 500 in attendance. We are making new friends every Sunday. We are supporting the work of the Kingdom of God through the Church of the Nazarene all the way from Wapato to the Western Sahara and all throughout the world. West Valley Church is growing and healthy!

That's a different picture than what West Valley Church was two years ago. Remember? Within 20 minutes of the end of worship, the foyer was empty. *That* was a symptom of the condition of our community at that time. We were tired and hurting. We'd been through a very difficult few years. We just wanted to go home.

Now, on any given Sunday, what do you see in the foyer? Smiles. Laughter. Handshakes and hugs. Stories being shared. One group might be laughing loudly together. Another might be praying earnestly for each other. We see people who were diagnosed with cancer, or recovering from surgery or sickness in the hospital, now rejoicing with those who were praying for them. We see children scurrying around the feet of 80 and 90 year olds. Folks we are a family, and nowhere is that more evident than our foyer. What happens in our foyer is either a symptom of what's wrong or the evidence of what's right. Our foyer was a pass-through; a wide hallway/highway into a sanctuary. *Now* it is a gathering place for forging family and friendships. It is no longer a drive through; it is a destination. And it's time it looked like it. Here is what our foyer will look like.

We have been blessed with a beautiful building – it's come as a result of the sacrifice of so many of you. But did you know that in all of our facility, the foyer is the third largest room we have, next to the worship auditorium and then the gym? It is a great space; it's time we used it for its potential: a place for connection and community. It's too great a place to be a pass-through. We want

it to be a place where our guests can walk in and actually see what we already know about ourselves –we are a warm and welcoming church; that this is a great place to be! The Apostle Paul wrote what describes us: “Dear brothers and sisters, we can't help but thank God for you, because your faith is flourishing and your love for one another is growing.” (2 Thessalonians 1:3) Like the church in Acts, the Lord is adding to our numbers those who are being saved (Acts 2:47) We need space to facilitate, experience, and celebrate that.

Let's be honest – we forget how things look after just a few weeks. Have you looked lately? Our foyer forecasts a cold, high, hallway to our new friends. We want it to be a warm and welcoming place where we can come anytime, any day of the week, and sit down with friends. We want it to reflect how important we believe our church is.

So I'm excited to share with you our church's plans for the remodel of our foyer to become a gathering place.

How many of you have enjoyed the coffee and cookies between services? You know how congested that can become. We need the space. But do you know that our foyer is used all throughout the week – not just on Sundays? On Wednesday nights during our dinners, we have parents and friends who use our space to gather and visit while their children and youth are in activities. We've had concerts and even Karaoke and talent shows together after dinners. We have groups and Bible studies and prayer meetings and students doing homework there on most days of the week. Don't make the mistake of thinking this remodel is just for Sundays. It is bad stewardship to have a space that large and only use it for traffic on Sundays.

Do you want to see more?

Here is a top down image of our remodel. The first thing you might notice is that we are not moving any existing external walls. It's our desire to make the space we have as nice and as useful as it can be, while at the same time keeping our costs to a minimum. That's a hard but important balance to keep. To move external walls would send our costs through the roof. So we are maximizing what

we have while minimizing the cost – that’s good stewardship folks.

In the lower left you will see that our library will be converted to a café. You will notice, too, that the front doors have been moved over to accommodate it. This will transform our foyer into the community place we need. That’s been the dream of this church since long before we arrived - for many years. Three years ago, the Transition Team was appointed by the board to hire consultants from the Church of the Nazarene headquarters to study and evaluate our church. Their observations were that “our building needed attention to make it visitor friendly, that it was dated and needed remodeling to make it contemporary and attractive.” Their recommendation, approved by the Leadership Team: “create a foyer with a coffee area that will provide a place where people can for fellowship not only on Sundays but all throughout the week. It can be a place where new visitors can go to make connections with our regular attenders. It can create a place where guests can get information about the life of our church. It can serve as a small cafeteria for gatherings, studies, small groups, and connection.”

Some would say, why do we need to spend this money on ourselves? And I would agree. I think you all know me well enough by now to know that I wouldn’t suggest that we spend money on *just* ourselves. We are called to be an Acts 1:8 church – “to be (Christ’s) witnesses in Jerusalem, in Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” We not only *support* the mission field, we *ARE* the mission field. And this building is a *mission outpost*. So this foyer is the vision of a space that reaches those in our community in the way that they understand and where they’d feel comfortable. We are here to grow the church – from within and without. We need to grow closer and healthier and more like Jesus as believers, and we need to reach out to those who are yet-to-be believers. This space would facilitate both. We are here to introduce people to Jesus Christ, to equip people with a faith that works, and to live as people with purpose – to love, learn, and live.

That’s why this comes to you after two years of research and review, of reworking and careful cost evaluation, from the Leadership Team of the Church and a total of over 60 different people in the church giving insight, wisdom, and direction.

Here is a picture of the café gathering area. I don't know about you, but I can hardly wait to sit down in there with you or with our guests.

I've heard some people ask if we are to have a café, aren't we turning our foyer into a moneychangers' table? That's an excellent question, and I want you to listen carefully to my answer: no. Absolutely not. I don't want that either. That's the LAST thing we want to have. That reference is from Matthew 21, about the time that Jesus was at the Temple, and saw the moneychangers. Jesus got mad and turned over their tables. Do you know why Jesus was angry? Not because there was money in the Temple. My goodness, the Temple had a treasury – that's the very place people were supposed to bring their money to. Jesus was mad because their tables were hindering the Gentiles from being able to worship God – they were charging people to worship God and interfering with peoples' ability to seek God. They hindered people from coming to God. This foyer remodel is the *very opposite* of that. We are creating it so that others are *welcome* to come here and seek God – not just on Sundays, but any day of the week. In fact, even the specialty teas and coffees will be available for donation only – exactly what we do with weds night dinners!

So let's talk about how we're going to do this. Listen to me carefully:

- We will remodel our foyer DEBT FREE. We will NOT go into debt to do this.
- The cost for the total project is estimated at \$95,000. We have worked and reworked this project with our architects and contractors and our own volunteers to get this to the lowest feasible cost while still maximizing our potential.
- Once we have raised the first \$50,000, we can break ground. We have enough resources and volunteer labor to be able to begin once we have \$50,000 in hand. We will not begin this until we have raised the first \$50,000. Not pledged – in hand.
- As soon as we begin, the project should only take 2-3 months to complete.
- Here's the good news: we currently have *already in the bank* for the foyer remodel, \$17,425! We also have another \$6,000 committed by our church board and leadership above what they have already given. That brings our

realistic total of money in hand to just under \$24,000!!! Folks, we're already almost halfway to breaking ground! All we need to do is raise the other \$26,000 among all 500 of us and we can begin this project, debt free!! That brings our total to the \$50,000 we need to break ground.

We have in the foyer that you saw as you came in a display that includes the images I've shared with you, along with samples of the materials and colors. You will see a "thermometer" that will gauge our progress. There's even a locked donation box for you to place your offering in. Standing there will be Jamie Nordstrom and Maxine Lydin – chairpersons of the team that brought our final plans to us, and they will be there to answer any questions you have, and we have a brochure with answers to frequently asked questions.

These are exciting days for West Valley Church. We are a church that is achieving our goal of love, learn, and live. Let me close with these words from the Apostle Paul: "So let's keep focused on that goal, those of us who want everything God has for us. If any of you have something else in mind, something less than total commitment, God will clear your blurred vision—you'll see it yet! Now that we're on the right track, let's stay on it." (Philippians 3:15, tmt)

Pray