

April 8, 2016

Dear friends,

Well, the year 2016 is flying by at a rapid pace. Baseball season is already upon us. Easter is already behind us. And the Lord's faithfulness continues to bless us. Truly, we have much to be thankful for. I pray that you are able to see the Lord's blessing in your life at home and here at Central. If you are sick or grieving, I pray that you are able to feel the Lord holding you up through the pain. As spring time blooms, I am reminded anew of the renewal yet to come. Jesus will return to make all things new, dear friends. May we cling to that certain hope, now and forever.

This month, I write to you for two purposes. **First**, in my last letter I shared with you that your Session was to study the role and makeup of the diaconate in the month of March. I am pleased to share with you that the Lord led us to several important decisions on that topic. We are in the process of preparing a report that will share those decisions in detail. That report will be available in the coming weeks. We will also discuss it together at our next Town Hall meeting on Wednesday, May 11, at 6:30 p.m. In brief, the key decisions are:

- **Condense** the size of the diaconate to 4-6 deacons, total.
- **Continue** the diaconate as an ordained board of men.
- **Create** a new "Compassion and Service Team", comprised of men and women, that will lead and do the work of diaconal ministry under the oversight of the smaller ordained diaconate.

The primary benefit of these changes is that more of us, both men and women, will be able to more easily and effectively participate in the leadership and execution of diaconal ministry work. We look forward to sharing more information about these changes with you in the coming weeks.

Second, I want to provide a brief financial update for you. Through the first quarter of 2016 (January through March), we are falling a bit behind in giving. In order to ensure that we maintain our financially healthy position for the current budget year, please prayerfully consider the following:

1. If you are not currently partnering with us financially, would you consider doing so?
2. If you are partnering with us already, but not tithing, would you consider increasing your giving?
3. If you have pledged to Central this year, would you consider bringing your pledge current?

Thank you for being a financial partner with us, dear friends. Additionally, I want to thank all of you who continue to pray for Central's ministry and the work of our Session. We feel your prayers acutely. Please do not underestimate the power of your faithful prayer for your church. May we continue to be united in prayer together, for the health and growth of Central. Let us also remember to pray for our Senior Pastor Search Committee. May the Lord be preparing the heart of our next pastor, even now!

With great affection and appreciation for all of you,

Bob

Bob Hopper
Interim Senior Pastor