



July 2016 NEC 2.0 Update "How are we doing?"

Since announcing the transition in late October of last year, the most common question I get is "How are we doing?" There are many ways you can measure the health and success of an organization. We are most familiar with bottom line numbers you can find on the income statement. Although that type of measurement is applicable, a church has two additional benchmarks that lead all others: growth & life change. Here's a quick update on growth, life change, and finances at NEC through the pastoral transition.

Growth - Transition experts suggest that a church undergoing a major transition can anticipate a 30% dip in attendance. Happily, ours is more like 18%. There's rarely been a Sunday when new people don't express an almost surprised enjoyment and appreciation for the service. Most of our new attendees come because someone has invited them. In early July, a new couple came up to me after a service to say that they had gotten more out of that service than they had in all their collective church experiences! Since the transition, we've seen new growth at events like Getting to Know NEC, Belong, and our first Family Fun Night. And, one very measurable sign of growth is that we've had seventy-one new givers since the beginning of the transition!

Life Change - On the last Sunday in June, we had the privilege of baptizing four adults out in the Kids Zone parking lot. It was one of the best Sundays I can remember as we heard stories of how God has forever changed the trajectory of people's lives. Those baptisms were a visible pointer to the life change going on all around us. Since February we've add a "God sightings" agenda item at our weekly staff meeting and have been blown away by common life-change stories from all areas of NEC: youth events, the mother/daughter retreat, Restoration initiatives including our Safe Families partnership and many other events. We've even started three new Circles which is remarkable when you consider we are in the middle of hiring an Adult Spiritual Growth Pastor!

Finances - This is one area where we haven't been growing. Despite seventy-one new givers, year-to-date offerings are down by about \$60,000. While we expected and readied ourselves for a drop in income, we have had to tap into our reserve fund a little earlier and more frequently than in past years. Please consider how you can help us this summer. If you don't regularly support NEC financially, please consider giving. A small step could be to simply give whatever you spent in coffee runs to DD, Starbucks or Honeydew. If you currently give, would you consider supporting us a little more during 2016?

To boil down the answer to "How's it going?" I would say this... New England Chapel continues to grow and play a major part in changing lives, just as we have over the last twenty years. But, we need your help to keep investing in people's lives and investing in NEC. I'll continue to provide updates periodically throughout the year. In the meantime, enjoy what God has done and join Him in what He's doing!

Happy Summer,

Mike