

June 18, 2024

Centennial Families,

I'm writing to update you on the future leadership of CCC Student Ministries. Below, I'll outline the work we've done so far, recent strategic changes, a progress report, and our future plans.

In January, we decided to divide the ¾ time Youth Pastor position into two smaller roles. Last summer, our search process yielded an adequate but not large pool of applicants, consistent with our last three pastoral searches. We hypothesized that a 15-20 hour/week position might attract more applicants than a ¾ time position. Therefore, we posted positions for a Director of Middle School and a Director of High School, both 15-20 hours/week. Over one hundred people viewed these postings, but no one applied. Our hypothesis was wrong.

Just over a month ago, we removed those postings and listed a ¾ time Director of Student Ministries position. Since then, we have received seven applications and have at least two other leads. While attracting a large pool of applicants remains challenging, the ¾ time position is clearly more appealing.

***Two questions have arisen regarding this plan:***

**1. Would we attract better candidates with a full-time posting instead of ¾ time?**

There are certainly potential applicants who prefer a full-time job. However, some candidates might not apply if it were a full-time role. The question is not about the quality of candidates for each type of role but about the pool of applicants we attract. We are confident we can find a great candidate for the ¾ time Director role. Matchstick, our search partner, shares this perspective. Additionally, it is not financially feasible for CCC to hire a full-time position at present.

**2. Why are we looking for a Director of Student Ministries and not a Pastor?**

This change is a strategic choice and does not reflect a reduction in the value CCC places on student ministry. In fact, it might indicate a greater priority. Pastors have broader church leadership responsibilities, while a Director role is more focused. Hiring a Director of Student Ministries allows the new leader to concentrate fully on running an excellent student ministry program. After a season in the Director role, there is always the potential for the role to expand to full-time and for the Director to become a Pastor.

***With this background, I have two new updates to share:***

**First**, due to the difficulty we and other churches in our area have had attracting a strong pool of applicants, we have decided to hire a search firm to assist us.

Matchstick is a local organization that helps companies from multiple sectors (for-profit, non-profit, and churches) identify and hire excellent employees. We received positive references from multiple local churches that recently worked with Matchstick. We already see the great benefit they bring, and I am confident they will help us find the next Youth Director for CCC. Matchstick will expand and manage all our online postings, conduct active searches, perform initial evaluations and interviews of all applicants based on criteria we established, and recommend qualified applicants to our search team.

**Second**, a new search committee has been formed. They have held their first meeting and scheduled their second. Here are the committee members: Jon DeRidder, Anne Thurmond, Heather Dillon, Noelle Bergstrom, Stina Hoberecht, Timothy Plecker, Steve Rhyner, Adam Brewer, and myself. This great team

is composed of parents with both younger and older children, members of previous youth search committees, and volunteers who have served in Student Ministries for the past few years.

Please be praying for:

- The right applicants to find and apply for our position.
- The committee's work of prayer and discernment.
- A strong working relationship between the committee and Matchstick.
- The students and families of CCC and the future health of Student Ministries.

As always, please feel free to reach out with any questions!

Grace and peace,

Karl Helvig