

January 16<sup>th</sup> 2018

Dear Keystone Church Family,

Welcome to 2018! It is always nice to turn the page on the calendar and discover a whole new year filled with opportunities to make the year better than the year before. Before we rush into the new year we do want to take a moment and celebrate what God has done, especially in just the past month through Keystone.

### **Christmas Season Blessings**

On Christmas Eve, over 1,200 people attended our four worship experiences which represented our highest attendance ever. That is pretty exciting. What is even more exciting is that those in attendance also participated in an incredibly generous offering of over \$42,000! This will be split between two great organizations that Keystone has the joy of partnering with to impact our neighbors, both near and far. We cannot wait to share your incredible generosity with Hope Clinic in Ypsilanti and Samaritan Children's Home in Bangladesh. Also in the past month, as a church we have:

- Given 436 Operation Christmas Child shoebox gifts to children around the world
- Shared 164 blankets and 240 winter coats with those in need in Detroit
- Celebrated a full Thanksgiving dinner with the residents of Mill Pond Manor
- Prepared and served dinners for homeless families at Alpha House for a week
- Donated 150 backpacks and funds (\$4,000) for school supplies for Life Together Nicaragua

### **Giving: Investing In The Work Of God**

"Love where you live" is more than a slogan, it is how we want to operate as a church and your generosity plays a huge part in making it a reality. As we move into a new year, if you are not participating in giving to Keystone we would ask you to take that step. If you are giving but have room to increase your level of participation, please do so. The resources you provide are what help fuel all that we do at Keystone and we want to be able to do more. Also, there is a blessing in giving as you invest in the work of God in and through your local church home. You have the opportunity to give online, through direct deposit, through giving trusts and stock transfers or by simply placing a financial gift in the mail or in the drop boxes on Sundays. However you give, we invite you to share more and to make increasing your giving a goal in 2018.

### **Upcoming Sermon Series - Making Change**

We are not shy when it comes to inviting you to join in giving, because we want you to know that this is not something we simply *want from you* but something we *want for you*. God is generous. Letting God work through us by being generous is a step we take to grow in our relationship with Him and to love the world around us. In order to do this, we need to manage our financial resources in a way that enables us to live, save and give. In February, we will be launching a four-week series on our financial lives called **Making Change** (pun most sincerely intended). If you are looking to get a better handle on your finances you may be surprised to learn what God has to say about the issue. So, join us in February for an incredibly life changing series.

### **Welcome Pastor Steve Anderson!**

We have the ability to provide some excellent ministry environments and a great staff to help lead our ministries because we have a generous church. This past fall, we announced that Pastor Josh Fakhoury would be transitioning to a new role at Keystone as our Worship Pastor once his replacement was hired. Today, we have some great news to share. On April 1<sup>st</sup>, Pastor Steve Anderson will be joining our staff as the new Pastor of Student Ministry. The even more incredible news is that Pastor Steve, his wife Maggie, and their children Josh and Jen, have already been a part of the Keystone family for the past year-and-a-half. Pastor Steve has been serving in our local area and schools with Fellowship of Christian Athletes. We are excited to welcome him to our staff in April and will greatly benefit from his heart for teens and his 20+ years of experience in Student Ministry.

### **Over-Crowding @ 10:30 Experience**

One final thing that needs to be addressed is a challenge that has been created because of a good thing. There are plenty of challenges that result from bad things but this is one that is directly tied to something really good. The good thing is that we have a lot of people who attend Keystone at 10:30am. This makes sense because the most popular time for people to attend church across the USA is between 10 and 11:30 am. For the past few years, our 10:30am experience is more than 90% full. The rule of thumb in church world is that once a worship experience is over 80% full, it will stop growing and this is true in our case. New guests are most likely to attend the 10:30am experience (most popular time) and when it is over-crowded, it can discourage them from coming again. This is a big problem, especially for a church that is trying to love and lead an ever-increasing number of people into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ. If we don't have room for guests at the optimum time, we can't fulfill our mission as a church.

### **Making Room For Guests**

Here is how we would like to address this challenge. First, if you have the ability to shift your attendance to the 11:45am experience, we have plenty of open seats, not as many as we used to, but plenty for a large number of people to make the switch. Second, if you have children in Waumba Land, Upstreet or FUSE, we invite you to consider switching to 9:00am as our children's ministry environments are offered at 9:00am and 10:30am. Our goal is to open up 80-100 seats at the 10:30am experience. This will create the room we need to continue to grow and welcome those new to Keystone. I know that change can be difficult, but I also know that if shifting our attendance one hour on Sunday means more people have the opportunity to begin a relationship with Jesus Christ, it will be more than worth the sacrifice. Others have already started making the move, and if you can, please join them.

We look forward to an exciting year ahead as we follow God into 2018!

In Him,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ken', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Pastor Ken