



August 2010

Dear Friends,

CROSSING INTO PROMISED LAND

I'm writing this letter from the new youth and family resource center, The Crossing, which is slated to open in one month. The grand opening will be held Oct 8-10, starting with a gala fundraising dinner on Friday evening, featuring cuisine provided by Chef Cal DeMercurio. Plans are underway for the rest of the weekend including a Family Fun Fest, teen music event and cutting edge recreational activities.

Right now I can tell you that we will need bodies in here! Some will just greet and visit with kids, others will help keep the peace and be our security force. Some are needed to teach classes and lead life-skill elective courses. We will need bands and DJ's that can kick it up. We'll be looking for groups to rent the space for parties and corporate events; concert promoters can dream big and bring their shows to this new venue. Conferences can be held in here, workshops and clinics too. How about some men who want to build skate ramps with kids or show young men how to wrench on cars? How about some beauty classes and maybe a fashion show? Now is the time and this is the space!



**"The Crossing"
Grand Opening in October**



**Tabulating youth
surveys results**



**Anger Management
training for mentors**



**Transformation DVD &
8-10 week Study Guide**

TRACKING WITH TRANSFORMATION STUDY HITS THE SPOT

Here is some recent email traffic from a local pastor running our DVD study: *"...can't get enough of this Transformation stuff! It resonates with everything in my being... I would like to turn this into a preaching series..."* *"Great stuff going on in the Transformation Bible Study. Trying to connect with a couple of other churches in the Bay Area to consider running your study..."* I was quite blown away and honored to hear such an encouragement. If your church wants to do an illustration-packed, practical study this fall, contact us to get this video-based study.

GETTING REAL IN HAYFORK

When church people go beyond the four walls and get into the streets and local taverns with God's power and grace, following Jesus gets exciting really quick! Like in Luke 10, they went out, saw breakthrough and came back rejoicing. Close to half a dozen churches are working as one now, and the Kingdom of God is coming near to that community. Over 100 people congregated in the main park for the third time this year as a united Body of believers provided live music, food, prayer, giveaways, skatepark and swimming. The local tavern, after seeing the positive impact of the small ministry team, asked them to come back and do some music in there. Awesome! Keep it up Hayfork, we are with you!

LISTENING YOUR WAY INTO RELATIONSHIP

People often say, "You guys know everybody." Let me tell you how that came about. Over the years, we have lead with a posture of listening. We've sat with many leaders from diverse settings for the purpose of building bridges that lead to highways of transformational activity. We've discovered that a powerful way to express love is to *listen*

(over)

and then follow that up with a grace-infused response. Listening turns to action as God gives insight (probably because our first action is prayer). Many leaders struggle with outside chiefs initiating unsolicited stuff on their turf, so listening becomes a golden key. Coming with our message all dialed up, forgetting to practice active listening, is like screaming "I don't care to hear what you have to say because I've already sized things up and I know what to do." God has raised up these authorities and leaders around us, so it behooves us to work, support and come alongside them. Uniting leaders' thoughts with God's values in a community building theme creates good symphony!

Currently, we're in the process of "listening" to the youth and youth workers of our region. Many hundreds of 12-17 year olds are being surveyed to hear what they are thinking and envisioning, what roadblocks they have, how they spend their time and money, and how they perceive their community. This not only gives us valuable data but also shows honor to them. We're also listening to dozens of area youth organization leaders. As we personally interview them, we are framing the current snapshot on local resources and insights for youth. Your prayer is appreciated as we pull all these strands together to present findings to community catalysts and leaders in early October. A huge THANK YOU goes out to the nearly 40 volunteers who have stepped up to help with this project, and to Dairy Queen and Datawise who have given so generously.

TAKING DOMINION MEANS INHABITING & STANDING GROUND

Fathering the unfathered and being there for the at-risk teens of our city is why we launched mentoring last year. Project 18 has gained a favorable spot in the eyes of locals and we are now poised to pop to 100+ mentees in the coming months. This means that 100+ teens will have a new ability to mingle in pro-social circles. It means that many kids will finally get some friends that DON'T smoke pot. Every week we are getting new referrals from Probation and other sources. This week, I interviewed 4 more teens for future matching. Will you help us be there for them?

You can learn about Project 18 mentoring by viewing the Orientation video on our website, as well as the monthly trainings. This month's training event focused on the dynamics of anger management. Get up to speed and jump on in! Maybe you can transport kids now and then or visit Juve Hall once a week with us. Maybe you want to help run some sports classes, mentor parents of at-risk teens, or just hang out and meet kids at the Crossing? Each part doing its work is how this will succeed. This is where the rubber meets the road!

A KINGDOM VISION IS A COMMUNITY VISION

A Kingdom-loving heart is congruent with a community-loving heart. When you realize that the Kingdom of God is about the rule and reign of God playing out in hearts, culture, nations, cities and families, not just "someday" but "this day," your lenses shift and you see in new ways. You begin to truly hurt for the broken and march to the drum beat of Isaiah 61.

empathize more and judge less.

see the whole city as needing nurture, not just those gathered in churches on Sunday morning.

resonate with the call to "arise, shine for your light has come."

be moved by compassion, to OWN the issues and SHOW UP in the places of brokenness.

No longer does it feel okay to be a *hearer* and not a *doer* of the word as society slips deeper into darkness. Arguments about religion seem petty while teaming up with people who see a bigger picture and walk by the Spirit becomes a priority. The end of the matter is that the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of our God and Christ.

Abiding in the Vine, loving our region more and more and seeing Kingdom expansion all around,



Jon and Natalia Thompson