

## **Friends and Jacob's Well Family,**

In 2005 the Lord began to place in my heart a desire for planting gospel centered churches in our generation that would be thoughtfully engaged with people in culture. That desire grew until we felt a call, confirmed by the elders of Fellowship Bible Church in Brentwood, TN, to the Northeastern US and New Jersey. We raised funds, built a small team and moved north in the latter part of 2008. From there we have simply been humbled by the Lord's grace to build up his church, save sinners and shape a new community living for the glory of God and the good of the city by extending hope to others through the gospel of Jesus Christ.

This year Kasey and I have been contemplating many things being in our 20<sup>th</sup> year of marriage and ministry together. This season has brought about some focused prayer and searching before the Lord. This year also contained the deaths of five family members with whom we were close and we experienced certain realities about life and the passage of time. We've also felt the immense strain of living life in high level competitive athletics, our growing family and the life and schedule of a pastor here in New Jersey. The myriad of responsibilities, schedules and demands of life have been quite heavy for us. Along with this, there has been a season of personal reflection on my own gifts, passions and abilities and desire for Kingdom impact in the ways the Lord would lead. Ephesians 4 teaches us that God has given apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers and evangelists to equip the saints for the work of the ministry. I've sensed more and more that I am apostolically (entrepreneurially taking the message to new people and places) and evangelistically bent.

In light of this, we began seeking the Lord with wise counsel and our elder team in early August regarding our future. After much consideration, Kasey and I have decided that the Lord is leading us out of New Jersey for the next season of our lives. The deliberation of our hearts has contained many facets and layers as we have prayed together regarding the years ahead.

First, we sense a need to slow the pace of life and ministry yet remain faithful to the service of Jesus and his mission. We have worked very hard for twenty years and sense a season to slow down and rest a bit is necessary. Second, we desire to be closer to Kasey's family who have recently relocated to the mountains of northwest North Carolina. They are currently in good health and there is much life we would like to share with them and our children over the next years should God give grace. We also want to be close enough and in a position to help and care for them in the later years of life in the spirit of 1 Timothy 5:3-8. Third, my wife Kasey has been so faithful to our call north over the last seven years so it gives me joy to serve her and to move closer to family. Kasey is one of the true heroes in my mind in our story of Jacob's Well. Serving our family and empowering me to do what God had called me to while living in a culture very different from that which she was raised. As my good friend Doug Logan said to me recently, "it's not strange for a country girl to get city fatigue...she has served so well, take her home bro." Kasey remains my best friend, confidant and lover and is a wonderful myriad of expressions of God's tangible grace to me. Finally, our oldest also heads to high school next year and the others will soon follow. This brought some clear and immediate reflection related to their lives, education and our future. We sensed that moving would be best suited for schooling considerations in the summer of 2016 or something closer to 2025 after the nest emptied. So in light of all of these layers and puzzle pieces, we believe the time for family to relocate is sooner rather than later.

In light of this, the elders are in unity that Kasey and I will be starting a ministry called Power of Change in order to serve the church in *impacting* and *influencing* emerging generations in the

post-Christian West with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. My passions are somewhat eclectic and include direct evangelism undergirded by apologetics, ministry to men and university students (*impact*). We also want to give ourselves to theological training, curriculum development and coaching church planters and young pastors (*influence*). We hope to base this ministry and our family out of Blacksburg, VA. This is a college town with a large university presence. It is the place where our two girls were born. We have dear friends there and it is but two hours north of Kasey's Mom and Dad. We are also in conversation now with the global leadership of the Acts 29 Network as to how I can serve in that context with our work as well.

I cannot describe how grateful I am to those of you who have been partners in the planting and growth of Jacob's Well. Though many of the pioneers have previously relocated, many still remain in our midst. My truest hope and belief is that the best days for Jacob's Well and Acts 29 New Jersey are ahead. I couldn't be more thankful for how well our staff and elders are leading, connecting with wise counsel about the transition and caring for our family. We have much to share with you along these fronts that are exciting and forward thinking.

To describe the love I feel for you and your families is difficult to do without convulsions of soul and many tears. I've held you in my heart for many years and I will never forget this season of serving among you here in New Jersey. I deeply request prayer for us that we would all experience deep unity and focus in the coming months as our mission here is clear. This community serves as a team so that God would be glorified, people would be blessed and gospel hope would radiate from us in our words and deeds. Excel still more Jacob's Well. Your mission in the Garden State is a fragrant offering to our King and I'm deeply humbled to have played my part in His story here.

I would also ask for your prayers in the entrepreneurial work ahead for me as well. I am very tired in heart and spirit yet have much to do in the next 9 months. Starting a non-profit, trusting God to raise up a team of financial investors and transitioning our home and family to a new place are all before us now. Our kids are excited about this adventure though change is never easy for any of us. Yet our hope is in Jesus and his coming Kingdom and he and he alone provides the safety, hope and final home that we all long for and need.

On Sunday, November 22<sup>nd</sup> we will have a members meeting for all of us to be together and discuss our transition next summer. We'll bring in some lunch and meet together at 12:30 immediately following the 11am worship gathering at The 27. We want you to feel free to ask any questions of Kasey and me as well as our leadership. We have a good and godly staff team and elders that are ready to lead in this next season.

Please know that I love each of you and your families and this was in no way an easy decision for our family. Yet with prayer and hope we know it's time for the next season of the Jacob's Well story to be written and for us to submit our lives to the Lord afresh in his service.

Please feel free to drop questions to us at [elders@jacobswellnj.org](mailto:elders@jacobswellnj.org) or use this online form [https://jacobswellnj.ccbchurch.com/form\\_response.php?id=162](https://jacobswellnj.ccbchurch.com/form_response.php?id=162) just bring them with you on November 22<sup>nd</sup>. We have much to be thankful for now and in the days ahead as God gives grace.

For the glory of Jesus in our generation,

Your brother, Reid