



REDWOOD

COVENANT CHURCH

May 13, 2010

Dear Friend,

The Tourist...

My first visit to Santa Rosa a few weeks ago included a late Saturday night arrival. The next morning I waited outside the hotel to meet Dean DeBaun, Leadership Team Chairman, to take me to my first worship experience with the Redwood Covenant Church family. As I stood waiting for my chauffeur, I noticed a sign across the street marking the entrance to a Trailer park - *Journey's End*. Candidly, my first thought was, "I can't imagine living in a neighborhood translated, 'I Moved Here to Die'. Who would want to live there?" I muttered out loud as I chuckled. (By way of apology to any of our church family who live there, it was my initial but not final thought.)

A little while later I experienced our church worship service, staff and people. I shared with a few leaders after the service, "If I was a visitor new to the area and attending Redwood Covenant for the first time, I would come back." The afternoon included lunch with the church management team at the Charles M Schulz Airport followed by a tour of parts of the Wine Country with some new friends who are long time residents of Santa Rosa. The evening capped off with an enjoyable meal hosted by the Leadership Team at the cool Mary's Pizza Shack on 4th Street in downtown, "vibey " Santa Rosa. The Chamber of Commerce spring weather with the majestic trees, blue skies and friendly folks spilled right out of a brochure. My ensuing trips to Santa Rosa have only added "promotional" experiences and encounters to my Sonoma County portfolio. A Sunday afternoon drive to Bodega Bay, a stroll through Sebastapol or the lingering in a vineyard seem out of a fairy tale. More time with the church leadership and members in programs or casual meals have served to heighten my first few days in the neighborhood.

I found myself thinking, "People probably move here hoping this place will be their final destination because they don't want to go anywhere else. It's like they have reached 'Journey's End'." I met some folks from my part of the state - So. CA - who readily told me they don't have plans to return back South after living here and being a part of the Redwood Covenant family. Then the light bulb went off. I chuckled again thinking of how fitting of a title for a local neighborhood.

The New Guy...

On May 1, I started as the Transitional Pastor with the Redwood Covenant family as a new adventure in my life journey. I can't tell you where this season will lead. I share and embrace the Vision & Mission of our church. Pastor Tim Dally, the staff and the new Leadership Team have done a good work over the past year leading you along the path. I hope you find it worth the effort to continue with me for the next leg of the trail. I can tell you I hope to make the most of each day we share together with the purpose to bring glory to our Heavenly Father through His Son Jesus the Christ as led by the Holy Spirit. In simple words, to make God look good and give his Son's reputation a boost.

The Wisdom...

Paul writes in his letter to the Philippians, "To live is Christ, to die is gain." (Philippians 1:21) This is a life verse for many followers of Christ. Paul is saying, "While I'm here, I'll do everything I can to live for my Lord Jesus. And when it's all over, I'll be better off spending forever in paradise with Him and people I love."

In popular culture...Steven Covey coined a phrase a few years ago in his best-selling book *7 Habits of Highly Effective People* - "Begin with the End in Mind" (Habit #2).

"If you don't know where you're going, any road will take you there." The late Beatle George Harrison

The Next Steps along the Path...

...If you are new to the Redwood Covenant family like me, come back, bring your family and friends and participate in another Sunday morning at 9:30 or 11:11 AM to see what God has in store for us together.

...If you are a regular attender and you are ready to make us your home church, why not sign up this Sunday to attend the upcoming RCC Membership Class on Sunday, June 6, 11:11 (lunch and kids ministry provided).

...If you attend and you belong, find your place to serve our Lord's ministry and connect with a small group to experience the friendships to accompany you each day.

...If you are a believer and you've never been baptized, come this Sunday, May 16, ready to be baptized as a public profession of your faith in Jesus Christ.

I hope I have many more days ahead of me to live, love and leave a legacy of faith in God. I'm grateful for the entrance into what many of you consider to be paradise on Earth here in Sonoma County. Join me in the adventure of making every effort to live with faith, hope & love so when we come to the end of this journey on Earth, we know another one awaits us in what we might call "Journey Never Ending"!

Walking the Journey with Christ and His people,

Pastor Doug Webster