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BAPTIST CHURCH

Hello and thank you for taking the time to read our latest prayer letter for December and January. We are now only 3.5 months away from our opening Sunday on May 1st. Time is flying by and things are happening fast. With a new year comes a new theme and focus. Bellevue Baptist Church has partnered together with both Foundation Baptist Church and Woodin Valley Baptist Church to create a shared theme for 2016: Striving together for the faith of the gospel. I am excited to have our sending church and their sending church striving together to help Bellevue Baptist Church get started in 2016. We are so blessed to have this level of support and cooperation. On a practical level this means that we have a calendar of shared events with these two churches including activities like door knocking Bellevue and cottage prayer meetings leading up to the launch of the church. The cooperation doesn't stop there. Each church will supply people to help and participate in our services weekly with the goal of having 30 people in the service in Bellevue. This is a huge level of commitment and I am grateful for pastors and church families that want to strive together for the faith of the gospel, even when that requires sacrifice.

We just got back from the Church Planters Conference at Heartland Baptist Bible College. This was my second time at the conference and I was excited to attend again. I was amazed at what the Lord did at this conference and it was such a privilege to experience it. The Lord allowed me to present our needs on Thursday morning. Praise God that we received over \$7,000 of one time support and several pastors talked to me about attending their missions conferences or being taken on for monthly support. I am next year to attend again, but as a giver, not a presenter.

We have been searching for a meeting place over the last month. We knew this would be difficult due to the extremely high cost of living in Bellevue. With all of the schools and community centers rented and unavailable, we were forced to look at leasing space. Most of the available leased space was double what we could possibly consider even with solid levels of support. Two weeks ago we did find a location that although higher than our budget would work and has been vacant for a year. We were praying that God would allow us to negotiate a lower rate. Unfortunately, once the owner found out that we were a church, he didn't want anything to do with the deal and even stopped returning our calls. We should have known that even more than finances and a high cost of living, this is a spiritual battle. We continued praying and searching for potential properties. A week later we were able to find a potential meeting location. It is small, about 1,300 square feet, but the owner is open to a church and it would be within our budget. After that, we were able to find another location with an owner that appears to be open. Both spaces are right in the area we targeted for the church. Walking and praying the space has been amazing in anticipating what God will do. We are proceeding forward with one of these spaces. We are not sure if this is what God has for us right now, but we are praying that He would give us clear green lights and clear red lights. Would you pray with us that He would make it clear what we should do and give us guidance?

We are so very thrilled to be closer to the start of the church. We know that Jesus will build His church and we are just thankful to be able to participate. We are also thankful that you have chosen to be on this journey with us supporting the birth of another Independent Baptist Church.

In Christ,

Joel Creekmore