



Greetings Friends.

3/21/2010

We hope that you're enjoying the current season of Equipping Hour classes.

Providing opportunities for the study and application of God's Word is a high priority for us as we respond to the call of Ephesians 4 to "equip the saints for works of ministry." We want to be a people who deepen our love for God and each other through shared encounters with the living Word. Thanks to all who participate in the Equipping Hour and a special level of gratitude to those who serve faithfully as teachers and facilitators of this ministry.

We are writing to let you know about a change for Summer 2010.

After much thought, discussion and prayer, the session has decided to institute a seasonal break in the 10:00 to 11:00AM Equipping Hour from June through the end of August. In light of this change, the start time of the first Worship Service will begin one hour later, at 9:30. There will be no change in the second Worship Service schedule, and we will continue to offer childcare through age four at both morning services. *We will resume the regular equipping and worship schedule in September.*

Summer Worship Schedule: First Service 9:30-10:45, Second Service 11:15-12:30 (no change)

Summer rhythms disrupt routines for teachers, childcare workers and participants, with less than ideal results. The recognition of this reality has prompted a series of elder and staff conversations about our philosophy of summer equipping. Key themes of those conversations included:

- A deep value for teachers and childcare providers, and a desire to provide them with an opportunity to recharge and reenergize for the fall.
- The difficulties of securing childcare workers and teachers who are able to make summer-long commitments to the work that needs to be done.
- A desire to preserve as a high priority the Equipping of the Congregation through ministry of the Word.
- The reality that the summer Equipping Hour has been a blessing to many, and in spite of seasonal challenges, changes in approach may bring disappointment for some.

We want to share with you some of the benefits we hope to experience through this decision. We believe that as a result of these summer changes:

- The value, continuity and commitment to the Equipping Hour will be enhanced as an effective means of study during the academic year.
- Teachers and childcare workers will be able to enjoy a summer Sabbath from their work such that the commitment, enthusiasm and retention of volunteers during the academic year will increase.
- We can provide learner-centered teacher training during the summer that will enhance the effectiveness of teachers during the rest of the year.

In affirming our commitment to equipping the congregation, consider how a different summer routine might free you to be more intentional and creative in your learning and practice of the Scriptures. We have listed some possibilities on the reverse of this letter to get you started thinking and dreaming. You'll be hearing more about these and additional opportunities in the coming weeks.

With gratitude for your continued partnership in the Gospel,

The Elders of Redeemer

P.S. As always, feel free to follow up personally with any member of the session if you have a question or need clarification regarding this decision.

Look for more information in future weeks about these summer opportunities.

- Learn about the Bible during a weekend training seminar for teachers and small group leaders in late July. (Contact Josh Kwasny.)
- Consider adopting a summer Bible reading plan in anticipation of the upcoming preaching series. (Contact Tripp Sanders.)
- Pray about hosting a Backyard Bible Club for the children of your neighborhood. Let the church staff provide resources to assist you in the planning. (Contact Angela Reinhardt.)
- Participate in a missions effort where you can apply what you have learned in a past equipping hours. (Contact Wendy Browne.)
- Join a team that is planning for welcoming and building community in a Fall Equipping Hour class. (Contact Tripp Sanders.)
- Start a Bible study or join an existing one. Let the church staff train you to teach the Bible in a small group setting. (Contact Tripp Sanders.)
- Take some friends and their children and/or your home fellowship group on a trip where you can study scripture in a different setting.
- Apply the scriptures by collaborating with people in your shepherding community to bring benefit to your neighborhood. (Contact Wendy Browne.)
- Attend all or part of the 6:30-9:30 Wednesday morning prayer meeting (held in Room 110), which always provides a rich combination of Word, prayer and personal connection.