

PREPARING FOR THE

HARVEST

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WHAT IS GOD'S CALL FOR OAK HILLS CHURCH?

This is a timeless question asked by congregations through generations. What is the unique assignment for this church family? Over the last year, the Oak Hills leadership has been seeking an answer. And God has provided an answer and a strategy. It is time to transition from “One church on many campuses” to “A family of independent churches.”

Carefully and over time, we will release campuses to operate as **a family of independent churches** who will multiply our impact in our city and beyond.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A FAMILY OF INDEPENDENT CHURCHES?

The family of churches is a collection of churches who operate and make decisions independently while remaining linked by personal relationships, history, beliefs and values. Aligning in these areas as a family will promote cooperation on key priorities to address needs in our city and reach the world for Christ. We will celebrate one another's successes and encourage each other through challenges, as a family does.

WHY TRANSITION TO A FAMILY OF INDEPENDENT CHURCHES?

We see three strategic benefits of releasing campuses to become full expressions of the local church.

First, releasing campuses to operate independently will allow them to minister in their unique local context. Each community is unique: the needs, the culture, the assets, and the challenges. Who better to understand and minister to those needs than the people in that area?

Second, each campus has cultivated a great capacity to lead and to serve. Mature brothers and sisters will be given more opportunities to grow and lead as the campus transitions to an independent church. That church may then feel called to plant new churches, further advancing the Kingdom as God moves us into new communities.

Third, sustainability is greatly enhanced. The multi-site model depends largely on a central teacher. With Max nearing retirement, this is the time to raise up the next generation of preachers. The model of independent churches diminishes our dependence upon one teacher and distributes the teaching load to each church.

Context, capacity and sustainability. The ultimate result, we believe, will be the release of more workers into God's harvest fields.

WHEN WILL THIS HAPPEN?

The Oak Hills Elders have set a target date of September 1, 2021, for all existing campuses to transition to independence. Alternatively, if a campus is not yet financially capable of full independence, they will begin operating as a “mission” of Oak Hills Church. The earliest that a campus can move to independence is September 1, 2019.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR MY CAMPUS?

The staff and elders are working diligently to establish a pathway to independence for campuses to become churches. This pathway will include key benchmarks to determine when a campus is ready to make the transition. Each campus will transition in its own unique timeframe as God guides us.

You will begin to notice changes at your campus, both in context and capacity. Decision-making is beginning to happen by local leadership. Max Lucado will return to the role of Teaching Minister and will continue to preach and write. Your campus minister will transition to a role of Lead Minister, and he will begin to preach more often in preparation for a future transition.

That said, many things are not changing. Our mission and vision remains to be the Body of Christ in every neighborhood in our city and beyond. Our common goal for every person attending Oak Hills Church is to **worship and serve** on the weekends and to **join a group**, as these are some primary ways for you to go deeper with God and each other in community.

WHAT CAN I DO?

Continue worshipping God, serving where God calls, giving and praying, loving God, and loving your neighbor. Continue working in God's harvest fields.

Also, please **pray** for this transition and for the leaders and Elders of Oak Hills Church, that we be unified through these exciting transitions, and that we give one another grace through change. Let's work together as a family to position Oak Hills Church for an exciting Kingdom harvest, knowing that God can do more than we ask or imagine.

We know this may bring many questions. We've tried to answer many of these in this summary, through the Key Definitions document, and in the videos. Please review these for more information. If you have other questions, please ask an elder or staff member.