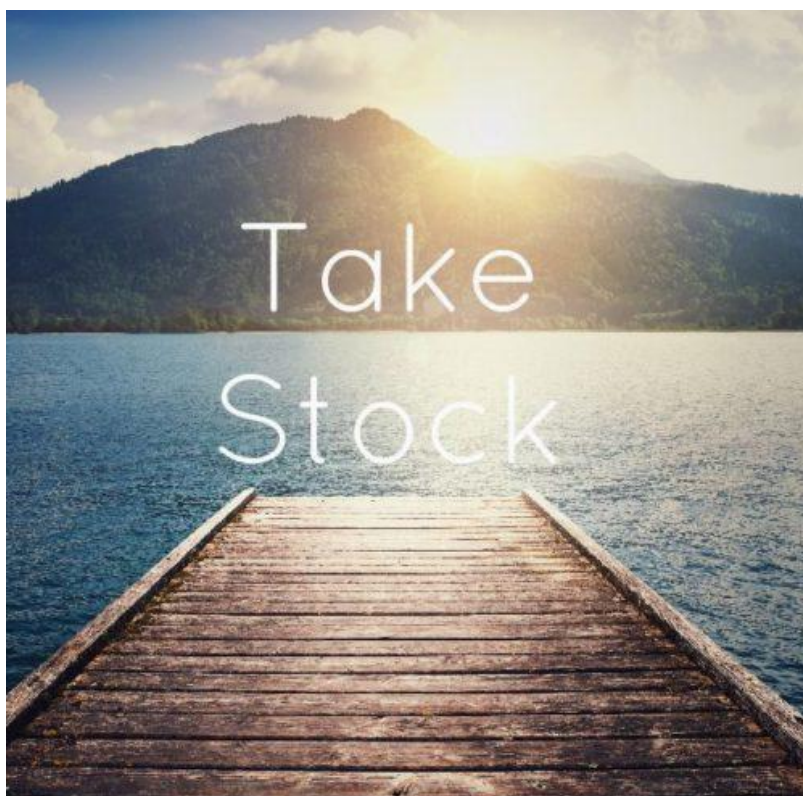


Taking Stock

“Reflections” Where are we going?



Over the past 8 months, the congregational leadership team has had the opportunity to dig deep into what our spiritual DNA is as a church and then reflect on what that means for us as the English congregation. During that same time, we as a congregation have explored different aspects of that spiritual DNA, along with key biblical principles that must define us as a healthy church. Taking time for this assessment was necessary in order to understand how God has uniquely formed us as a church and, out of that, how he wants us to serve and grow God's Kingdom where he has planted us. Our natural tendency may be to ask why we don't just trust God to lead, or allow the Holy Spirit to move us, but the task of 'taking stock' is actually a spiritual exercise that we see in the life of Israel in the Old Testament.



There were many times in the Bible when Israel needed to 'take stock' of her situation before moving on; after the sin of the Golden Calf, after crossing the Red Sea, and every time they erected a memorial stone are all good examples. The most obvious example, however, is when Israel was about to enter the Promised Land. Having wandered for 40 years in the wilderness, why not simply 'go for it?' Why not just trust God and cross the river?! Instead, God commanded Israel to do several things, all of which were means for them to 'take stock' of their situation before they pressed on; they had to renew their covenant obligations to God, they were told to take a census of all able-bodied men of

fighting age, and they needed to survey the land by sending out spies. Each one of these aspects was important for them to do before God would allow them to take possession of the land. Renewing the covenant was a spiritual self-assessment, while the census and the sending out of the spies were physical assessments designed to encourage them to trust in God's leading, not their own ability, size, or force. In Luke 14:28-33, Jesus himself uses the examples of a tower builder or a king going to war as a strong encouragement to take time for careful forethought and full commitment before setting off on the path of discipleship - to take stock. Taking time to be in sync with God's purposes and design is a spiritual discipline and a necessary step for Israel, as it is for us as a church as well. We want to strike forth in confidence that God is leading and that we're not trusting in our own understanding or strength.



Strengthening our core.

Except for a few loose ends, this process of self-evaluation has come to an end with the start of 2026. What lies ahead for the next 3-6 months is a need to strengthen our key ministries and leaders. We don't want to take on new things until we're sure that key leadership roles are filled with competent and healthy leaders, and that everything is running with the principle of discipleship as true north. This time also gives us ample time to assess how best to 'up our game' in serving the

community and growing the church. Like an athlete, strengthening one's core is critical to performance and staying healthy. None of us would walk into a gym and try to deadlift 200 lbs. Nor would we enter a marathon without learning how to run distances or building up our breathing and endurance. That's where we're heading for the next few months... an emphasis on building up, discipling, training, and empowering.

If you're serving now, please take the initiative and approach one of the congregational leaders; ask what we can do for you. I'd also like to encourage you to 'dip your toe' in either the Adam House or ICC ministries. There's no long-term commitment; simply come and see the goodness of the Lord. It's such a privilege to be used by God for his glory

Pastor Kevin

What lies ahead is a short time of strengthening our core ministries.

May the Lord continue to strengthen and use you this week to bring glory to his name.