

Reflections

Well, this weekend it was mentioned that the next church anniversary in September is the its 20th. Yes I know that is nothing compared with some churches celebrating centennials and more. The church I grew up going to is a church like that, but the one I go to now is kind of mega-ish. That is, it is quite large, expands four campuses, and has a couple dozen "plants" following its doctrines and leadership style, but is still nothing compared to the likes of Willow Creek or Crystal Cathedral. Anyway, When I first started going to the church it hadn't yet celebrated its 10th anniversary. I remember that celebration was done in the school it originally met at before they got their own building. It was still on only one campus, its campground was still in the hands of its previous owners, and even the building they were in wasn't yet fully utilized. Inside was a big fenced in area of, well, *nothing* which would soon become the second half of a new improved worship center. Since then much has happened. Besides being on four campuses now (one of which used to be a plant but joined up for a reason I never found out) and having a campground, it has a chapel that didn't used to be there, used mostly for weddings, a second floor in part of the building (the building was always one floor, with a roof high enough for two), a school, and has undergone much remodeling.

As for me, around that 10th anniversary was when I started working in the children's ministry. It started with an ambitious children's drama which took up much of the service time and was scaled back the following year due to the teaching volunteers wanting to, well, teach. I of course knew God wanted me there and so was part of the first cast. This lasted about three years. I even had a short stint at directing in the third year. Well, after the first year I wanted more so I started teaching as well. They put me in fourth grade with another teacher and we took turns week to

week teaching the lesson. On the weeks I was also in the drama (there were four casts- one per week of the month with any fifth weekends generally without drama) I would walk the kids down and then go backstage and get into my costume. Believe it or not, I wasn't the only one who did this. About that time a new combined program for 4th and 5th grades was just getting started. The prior year they had it as a Friday night program as a supplement to the weekend services, but now they were making it the weekend service. They started off with just one service on the weekend, but it wouldn't be long before it expanded to all weekends. Just why they did it this way I am not sure. Anyway, I switched to this service eventually. As I recall they went through a few staff members running it over the years to where it is at now with the current pastor hired about six years ago. I think I am the only one left still volunteering in that ministry from that first year (discounting the Friday night program). Like the church itself, this program has grown and is definitely in a mature state. I reflect on this because there is a high school student who volunteers in one of the services who was one of my first students in fourth grade. He is a senior in high school now. Well, actually from what he says he was a senior because he graduated in January.

I really enjoy working with the kids, and I know God placed me there and has kept me there. In fact, my best spiritual time I think was last summer when I volunteered as a camp counselor for 4th and 5th grade. Also the two summers before. I just wonder if God will ask me to move on soon like the others have, and if so where to? I am still involved with kids ministry drama as well, which after a hiatus of a couple of years came back as a different sort of program. Really, I am deeply immersed in this church and currently have no plans to move on, but eventually God may ask me to. Will I be able to if and when he does? Will I be willing to go where He wants me to? Would I be able to shepherd children myself as a pastor if called to do it somewhere? I can only make sure be ready I

suppose in case He does. And how about my own family? Has He been leading me toward this in a way? That is, I am single right now, but is this practice, along with subbing, to lead a family of my own one day, soon I would hope as I am not getting any younger...