



## Elder Update – February, 2021

About 57 years ago, a handful of London families started praying for a new ministry in Northeast London. It started small but the congregation quickly grew into North Park Community Church. When the congregation outgrew its Glenora location, they built the present church on Fanshawe Park Road. Since then, five Teaching Pastors have served the Lord through many more changes, and as the responsibilities increased, the church added staff and an Executive Lead Pastor.

In January, Matthew Eckert informed the Elders he will be stepping away from his position as Executive Lead Pastor of North Park before the end of 2021. He and Janice have formed deep friendships and they intend to continue worshipping here with us. Pastor Matthew will remain as Executive Lead Pastor during our transition to new leadership.

In 2015, Matthew was asked to move from his position as Pastor of Adult Discipleship to help with the leadership transition. In early 2016, the Elders discussed a three-to-five-year commitment as Matthew was asked to take on the full responsibilities of Executive Lead Pastor. He was the right leader at the right time to help us clarify and move toward our future.

Recently, Matthew discerned that a change in leadership style will be required for the next stage of the church's advancement. Although he has helped to stabilize and organize the church, he advised the Elders that his particular gifting will not lead North Park where it needs to go for its next stages of growth. We have confidence in Matthew's recognition of this need for new leadership.

When needed, God provided Matthew's steady hand. He is an energetic, visionary leader who models the importance of reflecting on God's Word and he challenges others to boldly step out in faith. He enables other leaders and volunteers to exercise their gifts. He has fostered a strong sense of community. North Park has a solid foundation of faith in the Lord, and a congregation of faithful Christians.

We thank Matthew and Jan for the many ways they involve themselves in both the joyous celebrations and the difficult times in many lives with their quiet confidence in God and their relentless hope. They have reminded us at all times of the Lord's presence and faithfulness to His people.



Matthew has led well. Beside his many accomplishments within the church, he has increased our communication and co-operation with other London churches, partnered with various community organizations, developed the Huron and Stratford sites, and guided the church's early and continued on-line presence during the pandemic.

The Elders who have served with Matthew have had full confidence in his leadership. We have enjoyed his humble willingness to seek direction from us and counsel from mentors within and beyond the congregation as he desires to honour God in all he does.

We know he has thoughtfully and prayerfully considered this decision, and while we reluctantly accept this change, we will work with Matthew and the Search Committee in the coming months and keep you informed as together we gain insight into God's plans for North Park's future.

*The Elders  
North Park Community Church*

