

EXPLORING VIA APOSTOLICA

OVERVIEW

In February 2021 we welcomed Pastor Nico Deschner as our Interim Lead Pastor at Celebration. With Pastor Nico being an Anglican Priest with Via Apostolica, his appointment brought with it a discernment process for our congregation as we discern first a potential long-term covering and partnership with Via Apostolica, and secondly the permanency of his role at Celebration.

PURSUING CLARITY

Over the spring and summer months of 2021 we were introduced and became familiar with some of the people and practices of Via Apostolica, with a series of opportunities for our congregation to grow more familiar with Via. Following this season of introduction, we believe it is important to give further clarity on the beliefs and practices of Via Apostolica as we consider whether denominational alignment is possible and beneficial given the present reality of Celebration and the hopeful future of our church. In September 2021 our board gathered to begin a Clarity Discernment Process, attempting to identify all of the questions and areas that have yet to be clarified about Via. Once the list was compiled - and understanding that it would serve as a living document throughout the coming months - the questions that arose were categorized and assigned one of three colours:



Green - Clear



Yellow - Needs Further Clarity



Red - Unclear

As a board and staff, our commitment to our congregation is to work towards tremendous clarity for each of these pending questions. Once the answers become clear and concise, our commitment is that we will communicate those GREEN areas of clarity to the congregation, sharing both the final result, and giving room for feedback and additional insights.

Over the coming months, several congregational meetings will take place as we move closer towards making a final decision on Via Apostolica. Please continue to be engaged and consider this opportunity prayerfully alongside us.

As a congregation, this Clarity Process Chart is available on our website, and we encourage you to view it as it will be updated frequently. Additionally, if you have things you would like to add, you can do so by reaching out to Pastor Matt at matt@redroof.tv or by using the online form at www.redroof.tv/exploring-via-apostolica

GOAL

To work towards tremendous clarity on each of the following topics – first among the board & staff, then amongst the congregation – in order to help the members of Celebration make a clear, informed decision about an affiliation and denominational covering with Via Apostolica.

LOCAL LEADERSHIP

- What are VIA's governance structure, constitution & bylaws?
- What authority does the local church board have?
- How are church employees hired within Via? In addition, how are they evaluated, and is this different from our current process at Celebration?
- If Celebration became a VIA congregation, what would be the transition plan for our current board, staff, and members?
- What authority would members of a local VIA church have, and how does it compare with our current model?
- How are important decisions made in a VIA church?
- How are local priests hired, evaluated, and/or terminated?
- What do the following terms mean and how would they be applied in Celebration: priest, elder, clergy, bishop?

MOVING TOWARDS CLARITY

THEOLOGY

- What is VIA / ACNA's position on women in church leadership?
- What is VIA / ACNA's theological understanding and practices of the sacraments and sacramental acts?
- Are there any social or political stances that VIA/ACNA take that would differ from Celebration's current belief system?
- As a VIA church, does the local church retain the right to define their own beliefs or must they defer to the governing body?
- Under VIA / ACNA, what are potential immovable beliefs that – if found to be in conflict with Celebration – could prohibit us from joining or remaining within Via?
- What is VIA / ACNA's beliefs around biblical interpretation
- What is the role of liturgy in a church service?
- What is VIA / ACNA's understanding of the priesthood of all believers (1 Peter 2:4-5)?
- How do we balance what we have read in "Pagan Christianity", what we have experienced with "We Are Church", and what we have seen and are considering with Via / ACNA?
- What will be our working definitions of the words evangelical, historical, and charismatic?

PRACTICES

- Under VIA / ACNA, what are the immovable practices that – if found to be in conflict with Celebration – could result in a loss of fellowship?
- What else would change in our services that hasn't already been demonstrated?
- What does a full VIA service look like?
- Would a VIA service include relics or symbols? If so, what would this look like?
- Are there any additional requirements to working with non-VIA / ACNA organizations?
- Would Celebration be required to use Anglican liturgy in our services as prescribed in the Book of Common Prayer?
- Will Celebration's priest and staff be required to wear vestments? If so, in what context and to what degree?
- Would there be any restrictions to Celebration's unique expression?
- Are we required to call our priest 'Father'?
- What are the consistent practices of a VIA church?
- As Celebration, are there things that we are going to have to stop doing?
- Considering that most churches tend to express themselves through one of the three streams, what does it look like to embrace all three streams? Are we diluting ourselves by pursuing all three?
- Who can preside over communion? Who can serve communion?

MOVING TOWARDS CLARITY

OPERATIONAL

- If replacing the lead pastor / priest was needed, what would the hiring process look like for Celebration as a VIA church?
- If Celebration became a VIA church, do members need to renew or adjust their current membership? If so, what would that potentially look like?
- If Celebration became a VIA church would we need to change or modify our name?
- Would Celebration becoming a VIA church affect our relationship with our field partners?
- Given the history of the Anglican Church with the residential schools, could Celebration potentially end up with a future financial liability?
- Given the history of the Anglican Church with the residential schools, could there be a potential required response from Celebration in the future if we were a VIA congregation?
- Once this clarity process is complete, what will we be voting on?
- Once this clarity process is complete, who will be able to vote?
- What are the methods for non-members to have their voice heard during this process?
- How does a congregation leave Via if they choose to?

DENOMINATIONAL COVERING

- What is the organizational chart of Via / ACNA?
- What is the ordination process for Via / ACNA?
- What is an apostolic covering?
- How are bishops selected?
- What are holy orders?
- If we were to vote to come under VIA / ACNA, what would that transition process look like thereafter?
- How are VIA churches unique from each other, from other ACNA churches, and from the wider Anglican body?
- What is the value of joining an overseeing organization or denomination?
- Does the local body get to participate in the decision making of VIA / ACNA on a wider scale? If so, what does this look like?
- What is the vision of VIA / ACNA?
- Why do certain VIA / ACNA leaders wear vestments or collars?

MOVING TOWARDS CLARITY

IN THIS PROCESS, WE COMMIT TO SEEKING THE LORD DAILY FOR WISDOM, TO EXPLORE VIA APOSTOLICA DEEPLY AND WITH INTENTIONALLY, TO COMMUNICATE WITH CONSISTENCY AND TRANSPARENCY, AND TO HELP FACILITATE UNDERSTANDING FOR OUR CONGREGATION SO WE CAN MAKE A CLEAR, INFORMED DECISION ON VIA APOSTOLICA

FINANCES

- What are VIA / ACNA's current policies that are in place to help them be financially transparent and accountable?
- What would be Celebration's financial commitment to VIA / ACNA?
- Who would own Celebration's building & assets?

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

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For a more detailed version of this document, alongside additional videos and information, visit www.redroof.tv/exploring-via-apostolica