

Some have asked how staffing will be affected by our transition from a multi-site model to church planting. Here is a summary of our work so far.

We are making great progress toward planting our Leander and Steiner Ranch sites as independent locations. We are currently in Phase II, which involves establishing local lay leadership. Phase III will focus on creating a skeleton structure for what the future church plant will look like. This work will likely begin in January.

While we are excited about the progress in planting these two new churches, we also recognize the challenges these changes create. One important challenge has been the growing concern among staff about what our future will look like as we transition from a multi-site church to a single-site church that will plant two new churches.

This concern among our staff is understandable. Our current staffing and organization are designed to support work at sites that will not be part of our staffing model in the future. We have roles on our team now that work directly at the sites and other roles that oversee work at our sites.

Our Executive Leadership recognized the progression toward planting our sites as churches. We also saw the concerns growing among our staff as this progress continued. The challenge for leadership was to create clarity in a process that currently has no defined timeline.

The decision was made to outline the general staff structure for each launched church and the specific staff structure for Hill Country once the plants are launched. We can only outline the general staff structure for each church plant at this stage. Once the elders are set for each church plant, they will run a process to select a Lead Pastor. After that, each church plant will determine its staff structure. Generally speaking, we

anticipate each plant will have a team of four full-time staff members or the equivalent thereof.

We can clearly identify the staff structure for Hill Country once our sites have launched. So, we set out to establish that structure so staff members could gain visibility into what the future will look like with greater certainty.

Once leadership had clarity, we began communicating this to our staff teams. Over the course of six weeks, we communicated the big picture and how each team member would be affected. All staff members had multiple rounds of communication to process the information and any emotions that arose as a result.

It is true that planting our sites as independent churches will create new roles. It is also true that transitioning these sites to independence will reduce the roles needed at the Lakeline campus. This was the concern many staff members felt early this fall. The process of communicating what this will look like in the months ahead has been clarifying for some and challenging for others.

Knowing this might create concern for some staff, Hill Country created an option that staff could elect into. If a team member did not want to remain on the team through the transition period or for any other reason, staff were given the option to take a voluntary severance. The severance package would provide 12 weeks of support at whatever level their position currently merits.

This means that by being informed in November, maintaining employment through December, and receiving 12 weeks of support in the new year, many staff members would have nearly five months of an off-ramp. We believe this will be helpful for their transition into whatever future they choose to pursue.

Once we clarified the roles, we asked staff to indicate their goals for the months ahead. Many staff indicated that they would like to retain the roles they currently hold, even if those roles will be modified in the future. Others expressed interest in serving at the new church plants, even though those decisions would not happen immediately. Some staff chose to take advantage of the voluntary severance.

As we continue moving toward the launch of our two church plants, we will continue to provide ministry support for each site. For any team member who chose the voluntary severance, we have a clear plan for how their responsibilities will be smoothly transitioned to others. For team members who wish to apply for new roles once the plants are ready, their current jobs are protected until the time is right for them to transition with the church plant. And for those who will remain on the team moving forward, we celebrate all that God plans to do here at Hill Country.

We have a long history of trusting God with the sacrifices required by church planting. He has always provided for us in return for what we've released to Him. We believe this is part of our future, not just our past. Hill Country remains in a strong position for ministry during this transition season. We thank you for your ongoing work in ministry both here at Hill Country and throughout greater Austin, as we remain focused on our call to saturate the gospel wherever we are.