

Pastor's Perspective: Where I'm Leading

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“Don’t overestimate what can happen in two years or underestimate what can happen in ten!” was the conference minister’s advice to me when I was first called by CCAM as pastor. Almost nine years have passed since then and so I find myself asking, “How effective has my leadership been?”. From my perspective, as limited as it may be, we’ve come through quite a bit of growth together at CCAM: there has been significant restoration of broken relationships, much trust has been built as well as credibility in the congregation and community, and continuity has been built among our organizational leadership through Elders and Council. Thanks to the unified effort of the planning team, a successful sabbatical was accomplished in 2016 that was not only refreshing for my family but renewed a sense of call to our place in Akron and Alden. We’ve experienced a growing unity at CCAM overall; demonstrated, at least in part, by the overwhelming affirmation of my last two 5-year terms as pastor.

In the past 18 months or so God has been impressing on my heart that He wants CCAM to have an even deeper impact in the region and that there are more people He’d like us to connect with for care and discipleship. Through the leadership and vision of New York Mennonite Conference, Next Level Coaching and the Revive Missional formation residency, God has guided my own thoughts and vision for our specific context. I can’t say it is all crystal clear in my head, but I know for certain God will continue to faithfully guide us as we prayerfully submit ourselves to His will.

Below is a list of six areas where I am leading with fairly high certainty, at a managed pace and in accountability with the Elders and Council. I intend to:

- Lead through other leaders
- Be more attentive to guests
- Teach toward transformation
- Intentionally have us permeate the Akron-Newstead Community as a people of God
- Emphasize discipleship of Jesus more than conversion, church attendance, or denominational affiliation
- Increase congregation's exercising of spiritual gifts

I will do my best to flesh out the origin of each area and describe how these have or might possibly be implemented practically in the next several issues of *The Pastor's Perspective*.