



Dear Fuller Community and Friends,

Over the last month, I've sent several letters describing the whirlwind of disruption that has upended graduate seminary education in the last few years, and the ways we have tried to shift those g-forces to the advantage of Fuller's core mission. I'm writing now to tell you about a key decision that has just been made (one that, amazingly, was first considered 50 years ago). After a long and careful process, our Board of Trustees has made the decision that, for the vibrant future of Fuller's mission, we will sell our campus in Pasadena and move to a new location. Our home for the last 70 years will make our home for the next 70 years possible. That's where this letter is going—from that bittersweet decision to what I now see as an inspired way forward.

Let me go back to a time earlier in our deliberations, when the trustees gathered late one night on the mall of the Pasadena campus, recalling memories that stretched back almost to the beginning. My own thoughts wandered to my years as a student, long before it was imaginable that I might serve as president during a time of such radical transformation. Emotions ran a dizzying gamut from nostalgia to anticipation as we prayed, thanking God for all the faithful years of life lived—and scriptures studied—together on our campus. Could it be, we wondered, that the endowment to empower the future was buried in the ground we were standing on?

In the last few years we have been through meticulous financial excavation, budget scrutiny, and painful cuts as we've navigated an increasingly challenging and disrupted higher education landscape. Belt-tightening alone, though, is not enough for the level of change occurring. Trustees, senior leadership, faculty, staff, students, and friends of Fuller spent months in due diligence and fasting and prayer, convinced that theological education is just as necessary for this new era as ever, but knowing we must take bold risks and have a bold vision in order to transform. It is unsettling, yet it is also essential. Still, we have taken careful time to come to a decision, holding rumors and speculation and even our own impatience at bay.

As with all stories of transformation, God has been leading. Yes, it has required boldness from our trustees, humility and imagination from our faculty, dogged loyalty from our staff and administrators, honest dialogue with our students, and prayerful trust from our alumni to innovate for a new day: but it is God who has redeemed a difficult season with possibilities so hopeful and unexpected that plans to leave our longtime campus in Pasadena now hold rebirth as much as farewell.

If such a transition were to happen, we asked, where might we go—since maintaining our accreditation requires us to be in California and we've committed to stay within commuting distance? We established more than a dozen stringent criteria as we considered every possible kind of configuration and location in Southern California. Each suggestion starting with, "Did

you think of . . .” we can answer with, “Yes, yes we did.” Ultimately, through the extensive labor of some of Fuller’s most skilled and influential advisors and trustees, we have decided to begin our next season 27 miles east in Pomona. There is a lovely, unexpected story of how it came to be Fuller’s new home, but let it be enough for now to say that our beginnings in Pomona may look much like our start so many years ago in Pasadena. While leaving will be difficult for many of us, myself included, I am confident that this is the right move to carry us into the decades to come. The sale and move will provide:

- a sizable increase to our endowment, putting Fuller on firmer ground for the next century
- the elimination of all debt
- a significantly lower cost of living for faculty, staff, and students
- seed funding for state-of-the-art facilities designed for both traditional and embedded learning and smarter centralized administration

We believe this decision—along with other necessary bold moves—will address concerns about financial sustainability for Fuller, allowing us to actually invest in the future of theological education at a time of industry-wide disruption so great that many seminaries are closing. It will also empower Fuller to offer deep biblical scholarship in new ways for a different day. In the meantime, I assure you that our commitment to providing rigorous theological, psychological, and intercultural studies remains unchanged.

For the next three years, we gratefully remain in Pasadena: we are committed to leaving well by treating this place and its people with love and celebration. We have been blessed with a rich inheritance; now is the time to use it to expand the mission established by our founder, Charles Fuller, decades ago. Meanwhile, we will be designing and building a new campus for the next era of theological education and spiritual formation.

Our work together will always be located where the hunger for learning and theological scholarship meet. In a few years, when we celebrate our 75th anniversary, we will also celebrate a new era of ministry, grounded in a new city, and extending wherever we are as Fuller—anywhere in the world.

Seeing and anticipating God’s faithfulness,

Mark Labberton, President

P.S. Your feedback is very important. Please check for updates, ask questions, submit ideas, and find answers to FAQ on our web pages dedicated to this transformation at fuller.edu/future. There you will also find a sign up form where you can give us your email address—our preferred way of communicating. Thank you.