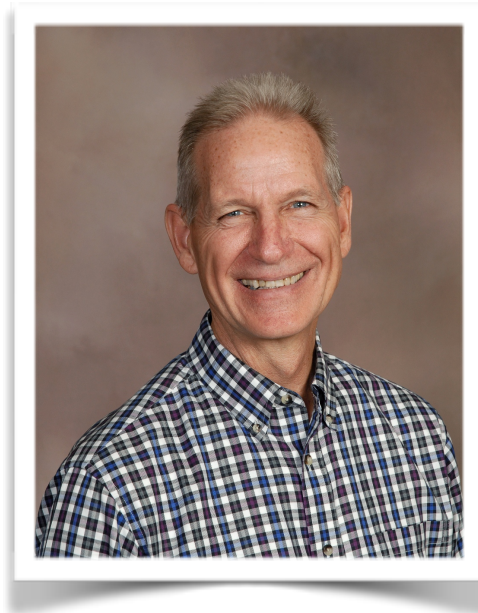




Pastor Rod Suess - Lead Pastor



Ten years ago, I was unexpectedly called to come back to the church where I grew up to serve as Vinewood's lead pastor. I originally had no intention of becoming a pastor and actually laughed at the pastor who suggested that might be something in my future. Instead, I had dreamed of being an artist for Disney, but eventually discovered that God's gifting was in a different direction. Along the way I met a young woman named Janeen, pursued her, and eventually convinced her to marry me. Next to my decision to follow Jesus, it's been the best decision in my life. God has blessed us with three children, Melanie, Emily and Nathan, and then added a son-in-law, Lawrence, for good measure. They are a constant source of joy.

Janeen always wanted to be a missionary, something that had to be talked through before our marriage could proceed. After serving two and a half years in the Palau Islands, and more nudges from the Holy Spirit, I went to seminary, then pastored a multi-cultural, multi-congregational church in Fresno for thirteen years. I love to read and have been greatly influenced by the writing of C.S. Lewis, Dallas Willard, John Ortberg, and many others. I also love to read history and a good mystery, and of course, I squeeze in Dr. Seuss whenever I get a chance. The name speaks for itself.

Over all these years God has been teaching me what it means to live with Him, stay focused on Jesus, and be transformed to be like Him. It's a work in progress, but the ultimate completion is guaranteed (Philippians 1:6).