



Sunday April 8th, 2018

When our family gets together to make a decision about something, we have what is called a “family meeting.” It calls us all together in order that we might share with one another in that decision. Today, I want to have a family meeting, so I am calling all of you together to share my heart with you.

Susan and I have been truly blessed that God has allowed us to serve with you for all these years. One of the most difficult challenges of any long term pastorate is the decision to step aside and let the next man of God take over and continue moving the church forward. We have been praying that God would affirm the proper timing for such a decision. The Lord has shown us that a transition process of mentoring your new pastor before I leave could benefit Longview Heights greatly. Our desire is that this time of transition would allow the basic mission and DNA of Longview to continue with Gospel-centered preaching, a strong mission emphasis, solid Sunday School ministry, and a heart for church planting.

With that background, let me share with you our journey to this decision and what it means for a church family to “transition a pastor”. It began several months ago as I started searching for God’s direction in this matter. At the beginning of this year, I confided in several men who have walked with me through ministry, served faithfully, and who love Longview as much as I do regarding God’s plan for the future. I shared with each of them a plan for churches known as “transitioning”. I have personally watched as other churches have either flourished or been destroyed during times of pastoral change. Our goal is that the process of transitioning pastors can be a positive tool in bringing God’s new man to Longview Heights. This timed process will give ample opportunity for a fresh vision and unity to the church family.

Several steps are included in the process:

- A) The church votes to follow this suggestion and approves the action. A special “family meeting” would take place on April 22, 2018 at 5:30 p.m. for the purpose of such an approval as well as a question and answer time concerning the transition steps.
- B) The Transition Leadership Counsel, consisting of Don Carson, Willard Gargis, Jordan Bledsoe, Scotty Moss, Donnie Jarnagin, Mark Cantrell, and David Windham, have walked with me through the process and would continue to serve by giving direction and guidance to everyone as well as answering additional questions as they arise.
- C) The transition leadership counsel (TLC) will recommend that Longview assemble 3 men and 2 women, in accordance with church bylaws, to represent our church as a Pastoral Search Committee. This committee, along with our already elected Personnel ministry team would begin meeting to prepare for, solicit, and screen potential applicants with the objective of having the new church pastor on staff sometime between September 2018 and January of 2019.

D) I would continue to serve in pastoral leadership and to coach, mentor, and guide the new pastor as needed while gradually turning over the responsibilities of Senior Pastor.

E) I would then, at the time of my 25th anniversary as pastor (June, 2019), relinquish all duties to the new pastor.

F) At that time, Susan and I would leave Longview so as to not hinder, in any way, the vision or direction of the new pastor and pursue whatever new chapter that God has laid out for us.

NOTE 3 THINGS:

1) I will not be choosing your new pastor. I hope that I can be helpful in continuing the legacy of Longview by pastoring well through the process.

2) April 22, 2018, at 5:30 p.m.... Q and A time, approval of the transitional process, and approval of pastoral search committee.

3) Creation of a page on the church website where you can ask questions, share comments, and even present resumes should you desire to do so.

Transition is never easy but is necessary for the church to continue to grow and move forward. If you are unsure about the process I have just explained, don't worry. In the days ahead, the process and direction Longview is headed will be shared and explained as often as necessary. We welcome your questions.

Susan and I covet your prayers and support during these days as we look with anticipation and excitement toward Longview's future as well as God's next step for us in ministry as a couple. We are thankful for His confirmation that the time has come for the process to begin.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dr. D. Wayne Marshall". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "D".