

8.16.20

Greenwell Springs Baptist Church Family,

We continue to meet and pray about so many important topics, not the least of which is naming an Interim Pastor. As of now, God has still not led us to a decision as to who the Interim Pastor should be. I believe all of us would acknowledge and agree that we are in a critical time for our church. So while we are exercising patience in waiting, know that we are actively meeting and engaged in continual dialogue as an Elder Body to make the best decision for our church.

We have committed to providing regular updates to all of you at the conclusion of each Sunday morning service like we began the Sunday when Bro Brian announced he was called to another church because we understand the importance of providing information in a timely manner to the church during this time of transition. This week we also had an Elder provide an update at the Wednesday services too. We will continue to provide these updates in person.

That said, this week we heard from some church members that they didn't know what was going on at church or what our plans are during this transition time. Candidly, those comments were surprising until it dawned on us that these church members, like a significant number of other church members, are still worshipping from home online. And our updates are done during the portion of the service after the invitation that is not live-streamed or recorded.

We are now working on utilizing other ways to communicate in the future such as statements like these and videos that will be posted on the church website and social media with the hope that more will be on the same page as to what is going at church.

In addition, as we received calls, texts, emails, letters, and met with church members recently, several common themes become apparent to us such as:

- Many do not understand how our church operates in terms of roles and responsibilities
- A large percentage of our church members do not know that we are governed by a Constitution and By Laws and for those that do know we have a Constitution and By Laws, few understand what it requires and even fewer have ever read it
- Many do not know who the majority of the Elders are
- Some feel unheard or without a voice

Almost without exception, after I or other Elders, address the church, we remind each of you to feel free to reach out to any of us with any question or concern but admittedly that invitation to dialogue has rarely happened until recently.

This week after a post on the Church's Member Facebook page led to a series of divisive comments, the Elders asked Bro. Andy to communicate to the church the importance of being careful as to what is posted so as to avoid dissension. He did so in a video that was posted on Facebook. We also made the decision to have the questionable post removed along with all inappropriate comments. Later in the week, another series of comments were removed because of the division that was being stirred up again.

After the first Facebook incident this week, an email address, elders@greenwellsprings.com, was created so that anyone can reach us directly instead of using social media for dialogue that can too easily lead to discord and division. We have had numerous emails submitted already and every one was replied to in a

timely and forthright manner. That is our commitment to all of you in terms of any form of communication with us.

So if you have a question or concern, please address it directly with any one of us so that we can provide you an answer. We will respond to you. We welcome conversation with you. Your voice does matter and will be heard.

Therefore, in an effort to provide clarity, answers and unity to our fellowship, we will be hosting a Question and Answer Session on Sun Sept 13, 2020 at the 10:30 service. We understand this time slot may seem unusual but it is evident that we need to come together as a church family and the reality is that Sunday morning is the best opportunity to have the most church members present.

A form has been created for questions to be submitted anonymously in electronic or hard copy manner. Copies are available at the Welcome Center and soon, all will be provided a church link to complete the form online for those that prefer that option. You can also choose to complete the form by hand and return the hardcopy to us via a scanned copy via email or hand-deliver to any one of the Elders starting next Sunday August 23 at the conclusion of the service. A rotation of different Elders will be present to collect the forms in the foyer. This time will also provide an opportunity to meet and talk to all active Elders.

The deadline to submit all questions via the form is 6 pm Sunday Sept 6, 2020.

We will review ALL forms, categorize the questions and take turns providing answers to the most commonly asked questions in the Q&A Session.

It is our hope that this session will be productive, God-honoring, and help relieve many of the uncertainties that currently exist within our church family.

Lastly, thank you to all who have sent encouraging messages to us, especially this week. We appreciate your love, support, and most of all, your prayers.

May we all continue to seek the Lord together at Greenwell Springs Baptist Church and bring glory and honor to His name.

In Christ,

Michael Loolara on behalf of the Elder Body