



# EBENEZER CHURCH

## A Note from the Pastor

My Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The call of God is a curious thing. Sometimes, it makes perfect sense, and other times it leaves us scratching our heads. I've been scratching my head for over a year. About 18 months ago, I began to sense God's voice in a way I wasn't expecting. It felt that God was calling me to take a new step.

This was so very odd for so many reasons. Ebenezer is an incredible church. It is blessed with wonderful people and world-changing ministries. I have felt the call of being a pastor since I was small. This is what I dreamed of doing at the kind of church where I dreamed of doing it, so why was I feeling this disquiet in my soul?

I had conversations with our Bishop, District Superintendent, and Ebenezer's Governing Board. I even hired a counselor to help me discern. I looked at data. I prayed and prayed. This is what came forth: I cannot stand with integrity before our congregation and speak each week about answering God's call on our lives if I am unwilling to answer God's call on mine. After a year of fighting, I finally said yes. I have discerned it is time for me to step away from pastoral ministry.

I realize this is coming as a shock to many, and, in truth, no one is more surprised than I am. Our family has been touched and inspired by the work God is doing through you, and serving Ebenezer will stand among the great privileges of my life.

In yesterday's sermon, which I invite you to watch if you have not yet done so, I shared that since January of 2020, before COVID-19 ever impacted us, I have been wrestling with increasing anxiety and depression. I know I am not the only person in our community facing such challenges. In the sermon, I talked about this struggle and some ways I've found help along this journey. While I do not believe this challenge is the source of God's call on my life, I do know that as my 15<sup>th</sup> year of ministry is underway, I need a break.

Our family is praying for clarity regarding what comes next in our lives. That is the way God's call works sometimes. We may not see all of the steps on our journey, but God always shows us the next one. In the midst of fighting with God these past months, one thought brought me great comfort. As God is calling your pastor to something else, it must be because God is preparing something great for Ebenezer. Next Sunday, February 14, we will introduce the next lead pastor at Ebenezer during our worship services.

This decision came after much wrestling and prayer, and it was not taken lightly. I understand you may have questions about the transition, so our team has compiled a list of answers that we hope will prove helpful.

Ebenezer is an amazing church with an exciting future. I want to invite you to join me in praying for God's continued faithfulness to this amazing congregation over these next months of transition and into the future.

You are loved.

In Christ,

Pastor Rob