

Dear Pastor

As part of the ministry review process, we wanted to take this opportunity to connect with you privately and confidentially regarding the reflections we have received and their impact upon you and Normal Baptist Church. As Pastors we understand, and appreciate the often-difficult nature of ministry, along with the frustrations and challenges that form part of ministry almost every day.

We also wanted to thank you for your willingness to participate in the process and for being open and honest with your thoughts and feelings. We acknowledge that it has been a difficult time for you and that the uncertainty around the ministry review process has affected you in a number of ways and increased your level of stress.

As you are aware we have met with seventeen people from the list of the contacts that were provided to us. Throughout the process, we have listened to everyone's reflection and the comments that they made in relation to the list of questions that were provided. We have sought to clarify issues when needed and pull together all the information we have received so that we could have some clarity around the issues that have been raised and the way forward for all concerned.

After a time of prayerful reflection and discussion along with input from our supervisors, we wish to make the following reflections and recommendations to you personally.

In making the following reflections & recommendations we feel that it is important to reflect to you that the overwhelming attitude and comment from the participants was that of concern and anxiousness about the ongoing health and stability of Normal Baptist Church. There was also an observable feeling of sadness and weariness from those who participated.

## **Reflections**

- Throughout the ministry review process there was wide acknowledgement of your work ethic, and visionary capacity. However, many participants expressed concern over the direction the church was heading.
- When asked about the most challenging aspects of participants roles at Normal Baptist Church. A significant number of people (14 or 82%) indicated that working with you had been difficult and challenging over the past 12 months. While there was great excitement and anticipation about working with and alongside of you, this has now dissipated.
- Lack of consistent communication was one of several issues that was regularly raised. It was felt that you often say one thing at one time and then change or even contradict what was said at another, denying what was first said. Others reflected that what is often said out the front is not what happens in practice, and that what is said is not getting through or communicated well to the wider congregation. 16 out of 17 (94%) raised communication issues.
- Connected with inconsistent communication was a strong reflection from a number of participants (13 out of 17 or 76%) who indicated that they felt that you did not listen to them and that you did not respond well or were open to feedback.
- Significant concerns were raised around the way that decisions were made which was in direct contrast to Normal Baptist Church's internal value of a consultative approach to decision making. A deep sadness was also expressed around the loss of some of the core things that made Normal Baptist Church, Normal Baptist Church. When asked for an example, many pointed to the cancelation of the Christmas Breakfast as an example of the loss of Normal Baptist Church and decision-making process.

- One of the most significant and deeply concerning results of the ministry review was high level of diminishing relationships and the growing lack of trust in your leadership. 15 out of 17 or 88% expressed a lack of trust and 13 out of 17 or 76% expressed a negative or unhealthy relationship with you.

## **Recommendations**

As we reflect on the interviews and the information provided from the participants we would describe the situation as tenuous, highly stressed with significant strained relationships. The extremely high level of the lack of trust and the negative or unhealthy relationships leads us to the conclusion that the situation is irretrievable and unrecoverable. Therefore, we make the following recommendations:

- That you make contact with Associate Director Pastoral Health and the Committee for Ministry to discuss your future and ongoing pastoral call.
- That you engage a mentor or supervisor to help you understand your ministry gifts and the best ministry settings in which they might be used.
- That you undertake training and coaching in areas of communication and change management so that you better understand your own communication style and how to communicate effectively with those with a different style of communication.
- That you undertake training and equipping in the area of Emotional Intelligence (EQ) to better understand your own emotional response and motivation for the choices you make as well as understanding the emotional responses and needs of others you seek to lead. (We believe that this would be a significant help to you in your ongoing ministry).
- That you engage a mentor, supervisor or suitably qualified person to help you reflect and understand the contributing factors to the lack of trust and the changes that you could make to ensure that trust is developed in the future.

We understand that these recommendations will cause significant uncertainty and anxiety for you and your family. Please understand that the recommendations have not been made lightly or without supervision.

In make the above recommendations the Association is committed to working with you into the future.

Please be assured that our greatest desire is to see you in a place of ministry that is life-giving and a reflection of who you are in Christ and for you to continue to serve and minister in the name of Jesus.

Yours in Christ Service