

GBC-

From Pastor Garrett's prayer journal dated 1-30-2005 "Lord, please bring the replacement pastor for GBC." When I wrote those words 5 1/2 years ago I had no idea how hard and joyful it would be for me when He finally answered that prayer. Our Lord has given me a deep love for this town, our church, and you, our church family. I wholeheartedly believe in what He has called this church to be and do. Though I will not be here to see it first hand, I know He has many wonderful and eternally significant things ahead for you.

The past seven months have been a busy and prayerful time for your elders. We have have read many resumes, reviewed many doctrinal statements, listened to many sermons, had many discussions, and prayed many prayers in search for whom the Lord was raising up to lead this flock into the next chapter of its life. Through much prayer, fasting, discussion, and counsel the elders unanimously agree that the prayer request for the Lord to send a new shepherd has been answered.

Yesterday we extended an invitation to Ryan Bishop to be our next senior pastor. He has accepted this invitation and he and his family are very excited to join us. We have informed the other candidates about this decision and are now informing you.

Ryan is an exceptional young man who is greatly gifted to shepherd a church like ours. He has a clear understanding of what a pastor is called to do and an even greater understanding of the purpose for which he does it, the glory of God. Ryan is a man of God who fears our Lord, loves our Lord, and will help you to follow our Lord. As he grows in the ministry, he will grow in the gifts that he is already more than adequate to serve in now. We are very encouraged by God's answer to our prayer. This is a wonderful day for our church.

Many, many of you have affirmed the elders in this decision through your emails, comments, and notes of affirmation for Ryan. Though the overwhelming majority of responses we received showed affirmation, we are not so foolish as to think that everyone will agree that we have heard the Lord and some may object to the decision. We understand this and simply ask that you prayerfully come before our Lord about it and then come to us. Please guard your hearts from the attempts of the evil one to lure you away onto some sort of dangerous path.

We as your elders have been so encouraged by the way God has used you to encourage us through this process and how the Lord has brought us all together in a way we never could have. We greatly appreciate the way you trust our Lord and pray that you will begin even now to pray for Ryan, Kelli, and Caleb as they prepare to join us in July.

If you have any questions or comments, please reply to this email or contact one of

your elders: Dean 456-3924, Will 521-4001, Reagan 521-2523, or Garrett 456-4224.

Thank you and may God bless this next season at GBC,

Garrett and the GBC Elders