



April 2017 From the Pastor

Retreating to Move Forward

I am writing to you after I have returned from the elder retreat. It was a time when we retreated to move forward. Let me explain.

Consider what happened with the twelve apostles that is recorded in the gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. This is what is written in the gospel of Matthew.

Matthew 10:1 *And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every affliction. (ESV)*

Jesus called the twelve together, instructed them, empowered them, and sent them out.

The elders went away this weekend to meet with God, get some training and be ready to move forward to do the will of God for our church.

The goals for the retreat were the following:

Educational

I wanted the elders to look at what it means to be an elder and what our church expects of elders. During the retreat, we looked at the history of our church. We also looked over our constitution and by-laws. We found some minor changes that should be made. You will find out about them at our upcoming business meetings. The

changes are minor, such as adding that we are doing business as "Pierce Hill Christian Fellowship." We also looked at two books on leadership and biblical eldership.

Spiritual

My desire was to see what God expects of elders and spend time being open to the Holy Spirit to work in our lives. We looked at a classic book on being an elder called *Biblical Eldership: An Urgent Call to Restore Biblical Church Leadership* by Alexander Strauch. We also spent much time in prayer for each other and for our church.

Encouragement

I hoped for the elders to see that God has put us together for this time to be elders of our church. We had a lot of fun bonding, and we also enjoyed eating together. After our evening meetings, we played games. We did a personality inventory before the retreat and went over the results during our time together. I was personally encouraged by how I saw that the elders truly care for Mindy and me.

Looking Forward

We also looked forward to where God is leading our church. We looked at the upcoming car seat check and outdoor family fun day and wondered what we can do to make it go well. We also looked at how to disciple the men of our church. We considered who God wants to be elders next year, and we considered how to develop men who could be elders in the coming years. We also looked at proposals made for electronic giving.

We were very busy that weekend, and I believe God was at work. All the elders were grateful to Camp Orchard Hill for hosting us and making the retreat a very good experience. I also thank you for praying for us.

In Him and for His glory,
Pastor Art

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pastor Art". The signature is stylized and cursive.