



A Personal Update from Josh Butler

Dear Redemption Tempe,

I love you. You are my church family, and I want to share an update with you. In a recent members' email, we updated you on an unfolding situation regarding an excerpt from my forthcoming book that generated some controversy. We provided a summary of the events and how we realized that, rather than make any hasty decisions, it would be wise to take some time to pray and process together.

Now, I want to update you on where we've landed: I am resigning as co-lead pastor of Redemption Tempe. I have processed this with our elders and am writing this together with them, with a desire to share my reasons for resigning with you.

We have found ourselves in an impossible situation. On the one hand, I feel called to step more into these public conversations. I desire to be humble, charitable, winsome, and wise. There are some mistakes I've made I wish to own but also deep convictions I hold that I wish to contribute to the broader conversation. Our elders have been unanimous, alongside multiple mentors and leaders I trust (within Redemption and beyond) in affirming this sense of priority in this season.

On the other hand, I don't want to drag Redemption into that public conversation with me. The toll of this controversy on many of our staff and leaders this month has been intense, at both Redemption Tempe and other Redemption Arizona congregations. While they have borne that burden well, I am concerned that my continuing to step into this public conversation would generate distraction from the primary ministry God has called us to as a local church. As elders, we've affirmed this assessment together.

There is also a time factor, with the book releasing this week. Over the last month, I have prioritized being present to Redemption in our local context over the broader national conversation. As the book officially launches, however, I desire to be present to that broader conversation and to create some healthy distance from Redemption congregations being so closely identified with my voice and perspective.

I want to affirm that this resignation is a joint decision between the elders of Redemption Tempe and I, in conversation with broader Redemption Arizona leadership, not something that is being forced upon me. We explored multiple options to make something work, and we have undertaken this in prayerful discernment over many



conversations together this last month. We agreed to a “Discernment and Repair” process. We have concluded together that the Discernment process (regarding my sense of direction for the season ahead and whether I would remain a pastor at Redemption Tempe) is complete. The Repair process is something I will continue to be committed to as a member of Redemption Tempe.

I want to affirm that I am committed to a process of repair with any members of Redemption who desire it. For some of you, my lack of greater pastoral nuance in areas of the excerpt evoked pain, particularly for some women with histories of sexual abuse. I want to apologize for not showing greater consideration for how my words in this section could be heard from within your shoes. I’m truly sorry.

I’ve worked with the publisher to make revisions to the excerpt based on a dozen additional sensitivity reviews I commissioned this last month from women (including sexual abuse survivors, counselors, and those who grew up in purity culture). These revisions will be incorporated into the next printing of the book.

I will still be available to any of you in our church who are confused, hurt, frustrated or angry over anything I’ve written, said, or done. The calendar link we set up last month will still be available for the Repair season ahead, where you can set up an appointment with me (email Jackie Bolitho: jackiebolitho@redemptionaz.com). I care about your pain and your story and commit to simply listening, not seeking to explain, defend, or justify. I care about you. Also, please know the leadership of Redemption Tempe is always available to you.

Finally, if you are interested in keeping up with what I’m up to, I’ll be updating my website and newsletter with interviews, articles, and key projects I’m working on: [HERE](#).

I’ve loved leading at Redemption Tempe, love you all as my church family, and am looking forward to what God has in store for the season ahead. I look forward to worshiping together with you next Sunday.

In Christ,
Josh