

STATEMENT ON ORDINATION

From Brentwood Baptist Church Trustees and Mike Glenn, Senior Pastor
February 2019

At Brentwood Baptist Church, we believe everyone is gifted and called to serve in ministry. Not only are we saved *from* our sins, we are saved *for* a particular service. That's why, when someone becomes a member of Brentwood Baptist Church, they go through a process to identify their gifts and receive coaching to help them understand how God has uniquely called them to serve in the church.

In a Baptist church, everyone is a minister. The church body is healthiest when every member knows their gifts and calling and is engaged in their God-designed ministry.

Baptist churches are led by pastors. Our tradition is that the senior pastor or lead pastor positions are filled by men. Our church affirms and adheres to this practice.

We also believe that both men and women should have significant roles in leadership and service — all under the senior pastor's leadership and authority. As Trustees, men and women work with the senior pastor to discern and implement God's vision for our church. As staff, men and women serve to accomplish that vision through various strategies and ministries. The Bible is filled with instances of both men and women who served God's purposes. Miriam prophesied with Moses. Both Huldah and Jeremiah served King Josiah. Phoebe and Steven were deacons.

Baptist churches are also autonomous. That is, every Baptist church chooses how they are structured, how they make decisions, and whom they call as leaders. The Bible says very little about church structure, but it says a lot about the qualities of a person chosen to lead. The Bible reminds us that we should choose our leaders very slowly and not appoint them too quickly because of the great burden they carry.

Gayle Haywood has served Brentwood Baptist Church faithfully and with great effectiveness for over 37 years. After holding several ministerial positions in her tenure, she's now serving as our minister to senior adults. In this role, she is with people in their most sacred and vulnerable moments as they pass from this world to the eternal presence of Christ. Based on the senior pastor's recommendation, the Brentwood Baptist Church Trustees voted to recognize Gayle's ministry through ordination. She was evaluated and subsequently ordained at a service on the evening of Sunday, February 17.

We should be careful not to read more into Gayle's ordination than is intended. Her ordination is simply a celebration and recognition of her ministry among us. Many in our Brentwood campus congregation have long recognized this in her life, and this step only formalized that recognition.

Gayle is not called to be a pastor. She was not ordained to be a pastor. Like every minister on our church staff, she serves under the authority of the senior pastor. Her ordination empowers her to serve only in the ways in which she is already called. Her ministry and ordination do not contradict any of the Apostle Paul's teachings to the church in the New Testament nor any articles of the Baptist Faith and Message.

We believe our God is still actively reconciling the world to Himself through Jesus Christ. We long for the time when the promise that was first given at Pentecost will one day be fulfilled:

*And it will be in the last days, says God,
that I will pour out my Spirit on all people;
then your sons and your daughters will prophesy,
your young men will see visions,
and your old men will dream dreams.
I will even pour out my Spirit
on my servants in those days, both men and women
and they will prophesy.
I will display wonders in the heaven above
and signs on the earth below:
blood and fire and a cloud of smoke.
The sun will be turned to darkness
and the moon to blood
before the great and glorious day of the Lord comes.
Then everyone who calls
on the name of the Lord will be saved.
(Acts 2:17-21)*

To that end, let every one of us press on the glory of God and the furthering of His kingdom.