

“Change can be frightening, and the temptation is often to resist it. But change almost always provides opportunities: to learn new things, to rethink tired processes, and to improve the way we work.”

Klaus Schwab

In November of 2016, it was announced in church conference that Ken Brooks was taking his first steps toward his eventual retirement in 2018. Adjustments to Ken's salary and workload were a part of the process that has now led us to this moment. After serving on the staff of Cochran First Baptist Church for 31+ years, Ken will be officially retiring as of Sunday, August 26th. In recognition of Ken's dedicated and lengthy ministry in our church and our community, the Personnel Committee has agreed that paying Ken's salary through the end of 2018 is a fitting expression of our church's love for Ken & Becky, appreciation for Ken's ministry, and a helpful boost into his season of retirement.

Ken's retirement signals a significant change for our church. Some of you cannot remember a time when Ken was not a part of our church staff. I have no idea how many funerals Ken has officiated, how many weddings Ken has officiated, how many hospital visits Ken has made, how many trips Ken has organized, how many people Ken has counseled...when a man serves on a church staff for 31+ years, the "how many" list is endless!! I frequently have conversations with grown people who tell me they attended Tuneful Tuesday @ FBC!! I am the fourth pastor with whom Ken has shared the privilege of ministry here @ FBC: Reid Crumbliss was the first, followed by Phil West, then Marty McClain, and all the interim pastors I cannot name. It has been my privilege to serve beside Ken for 11 years.

Ken's retirement also signals a significant change for Ken and Becky! I am excited for the retirement journey that Ken and Becky will be starting in one month. In all fairness, Becky has been practicing her retirement from teaching for several years...now she has to figure out how to handle Ken intruding into her retirement routine! Ken and Becky will continue to be a visible presence in our community as they split time between their Cochran home and their Dover Bluff home.

I suspect that many of you are wondering about our church's response to Ken's retirement as it relates to our ministerial staff and Senior Adult Ministries. Our Personnel Committee has been preparing for the eventuality of Ken's retirement and stands ready to make a recommendation to the church at the Quarterly Church Conference on August 12 related to the void created by Ken's retirement. Change often catches us unaware but change never surprises our heavenly Father... He was preparing for this moment long before we knew this moment was coming!

Here's one last change: we're back to our regular two-service schedule beginning this Sunday morning! I hope to see you in Sunday School & Worship, PK.