

Dear Tiburon Baptist Church,

Anne and I are looking forward to serving alongside you during the coming months as TBC prepares for the future. As your interim pastor I will be preaching at least 75% of Sunday mornings, but I do have some prior commitments in the next couple of months. I am still teaching full-time at Golden Gate, so I have to prioritize my time to give attention to focusing our vision, managing the transition, and training our church to reach out more effectively.

When I was a mission field leader I gained a lot of experience evaluating ministries and the resources to accomplish ministry objectives. Although we are all sad about the loss of three veteran pastoral staff, TBC is still positioned well for the future. I want to point out 10 unusual strengths of our church that are blessings from God upon which to build our future.

1. Vision to reach Marin. Tiburon Baptist Church was planted in 1959 by Golden Gate leaders. However, it was never intended to be a seminary church. The vision that God gave them from the beginning was to win and disciple people from Marin. If we align our church with God's purpose for Marin, we have a bright future.
2. Location/facilities. An earlier generation gave sacrificially to provide a beautiful location and church facility for themselves and us. Our buildings are presently adequate for our needs and in relatively good shape. It would be daunting to try to buy these today. At this time, we have absolutely no mortgage or debt. PTL!
3. Legacy of truth. Many churches today have lost their message. Throughout our history God has given us faithful ministers who upheld God's Word and preached the truth of Jesus Christ. We have all been transformed by that truth and are positioned to keep sharing it with those around us who do not know Christ.
4. Deep commitment to Christ. All of us live in an environment where Christians, especially evangelicals, are a minority. People do not show up at TBC because it is socially expected. We come because we are seeking a closer relationship with God. I am encouraged by the commitment to Christ so evident in you.
5. Outstanding gifting and skills. Yes, our staff is very gifted, but I am talking about the unusual gifts that members are using to glorify God. From music to hospitality to administration to ministry to outreach, you exhibit a very high level of spiritual gifts in ministry to glorify Christ in Marin.

6. Professional staff. We have lost 3 precious leaders in recent months, but we still have an outstanding staff. Brice and Stephen continue to serve with excellence and have demonstrated flexibility in making necessary adjustments. Chris is getting to know the church and doing a good job with the young people. Pashia is keeping things running behind the scenes. They are all gifts from God.
7. Intergenerational, multi-ethnic church. This is so much a part of who we are we hardly think about it. Intergenerational does not only describe who attends, it describes an attitude. We work to minister to the needs of all our various members. We are comfortable not being all alike, but we share a unity as God's children.
8. Outreach ministries. I have never seen a church our size with so many regular lay-led community ministries. We check on each other, feed the hungry, visit the elderly, empower struggling moms, visit and teach prisoners, serve migrants, and support missionaries. Our long-term commitment to these ministries is outstanding.
9. Strong financial position. Glen McCrae, our new treasurer, recently noted that TBC is in a strong financial position. We have some new challenges head, partly due to the loss of several seminary families and partly due to potential staff needs. Your gifts to the church empower our ministries so let's rise to the challenges we face.
10. Connected to Marin. When I was a pastoral intern in 1981-2, many TBC members were seminary related. Now we are a church mostly made up of Marin residents, and many of you came to faith in Christ in Marin. So, we are now more connected than ever before to the people who were the focus of the original vision of the church.

This is an unusual transition, perhaps more fundamental than any in the history of TBC. We are essentially coming to an end of an era of close relationship with the main campus of Golden Gate Seminary. However, I believe that God wants Tiburon Baptist Church to not only survive, but thrive. We must keep some precious aspects of our community life while making practical changes to position us for the future. Change is always a bit painful, but it can also initiate growth. Remember, our future is in winning even more people to Christ from our communities. Let's trust God, be faithful, and expect great things from His hand.

Your (interim) pastor,

Don Dent