

Wednesday, June 17, 2020

Beloved Family of First Baptist Church of Douglass,

For over ten and a half years now, it has been a joy and a privilege to walk with you as we have worked together to exalt the LORD, connect people to Christ, and nurture spiritual growth in one another as His church here in Douglass. Today, I am writing to inform you that Becky and I have sensed God calling our family into another arena of ministry, one with which you are quite familiar. On Monday, June 22, I will be nominated to replace Bro. Tom Edwards as the Associational Director of Missions for our own South Central Association of Southern Baptists (SCASB). As a result, I am offering this notice of my resignation from the office of pastor of First Baptist Church of Douglass.

Over the years, one of the things that I have most appreciated about our precious church is the devoted commitment to supporting missions. Indeed, FBCD provides significant support to the SCASB each year in furtherance of our common Great Commission ministry efforts with some 20 other congregations throughout Butler, Cowley, and Sumner Counties. In light of our church's support of the SCASB, Becky and I hope that you may be able to affirm this new calling that God has given to us, celebrate with us as we strive to follow His leading, and send us out with your blessing into this new ministry role for our association.

At the same time, I am very much aware that this will bring our beloved church into a time of significant transition. Please know that it is my desire – and, also the desire of the leadership of the SCASB – to help FBCD through this time of transition in any way possible. To this end, Becky and I would like to continue to serve and worship at FBCD into the month of August, preaching my final sermon as your pastor on Sunday, August 9, 2020. Between now and then, I will work with the various ministries and leaders of our church to help provide a smooth transition into the interim period. Please also know that I will remain available after this date to help you and FBCD through the period of transition as appropriate.

I know that you may have additional questions regarding my calling to the SCASB or how it will affect FBCD. I will be happy to answer those questions, and I will be sharing more information soon about the upcoming transition. As you begin to consider the future of FBCD, it is important to understand that every member of First Baptist Church of Douglass has a voice in this process, and I encourage you to prayerfully commit to seeking out that which is best for the church as you move into the future.

I would also like to ask you to commit to praying in these specific ways as we move forward:

1. Pray for Becky, Sarah, Hannah, Micah, Eliyah, and me as we prepare to transition into this new ministry. Although we plan to continue to live in Douglass, it will be necessary for us to step away from FBCD in order to facilitate the ultimate installation of a new pastor. This will be very difficult for our family as we desperately love you, our beloved church; and FBCD is the only church our children have ever known! Please pray for us as we conclude our full-time ministry at FBCD, and pray that the Lord will be gracious to us as we seek out a new church home and as I begin the new ministry to which the Lord has called me.

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2. Pray that the Lord would guide your own family as well as other church families to deeper commitment to the church's corporate life and ministry as the Body of Christ here in Douglass. Pray that all members of FBCD would grow in faith, joy, and unity throughout this transitional season so that each of you might fulfill the exhortation of the Apostle Paul in Ephesians 4:1-3, *"to walk worthy of the calling you have received, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, accepting one another in love, diligently keeping the unity of the Spirit with the peace that binds."*
 3. Pray for the man whom God will call to serve as the next pastor of First Baptist Church of Douglass! Pray for his wisdom and discernment, and that of his family, as they will also be undergoing a time of life transition. Pray that God would work such that FBCD and your new pastor would be blessed with many years of effective and fruitful ministry together. I pray that you will love him and his family as you have loved us!

Finally, I want to thank you for the innumerable ways in which you have poured out your love and gracious support upon my family and me over these past many years. Becky and I are particularly grateful for the way you have graciously loved and ministered to our children. They are learning to love the Lord our God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength; and this is in no small part because you have modelled this for them well. Brothers and Sisters in Christ, please know that you are deeply loved! Though we will miss being a part of church with you, our love, prayers, and friendship will always be yours.

In the love of Christ,

J. Voyt Lynn, Pastor
First Baptist Church of Douglass
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"I am sure of this, that He who started a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because I have you in my heart, and you are all partners with me in grace, ... and in the defense and establishment of the gospel. For God is my witness, how deeply I miss all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus. And I pray this: that your love will keep on growing in knowledge and every kind of discernment, so that you can approve the things that are superior and can be pure and blameless in the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God."

~ Philippians 1:6-11