



First Baptist Church of Kennett Square

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH of Kennett Square

In the heart of town ... with the town at heart

Aug. 2, 2021

Dear church family,

All of life is a gift, even those moments of life that are difficult and awkward. In those difficult moments, the beauty is that God's grace is there to help guide, sustain, and comfort us.

When I was diagnosed with stage IV colon cancer back in May of 2016, it caused me to think very hard about every area of my life. As a result, I made some important decisions about how I would live the remainder of my life.

One of those decisions was that I would continue to serve as pastor until I felt that I could no longer provide the kind of leadership that First Baptist needed. I committed to myself that I would step aside as soon as I believed First Baptist would be better served by different leadership.

Over the past few months, it has become clear that my body does not have the energy required to serve you well and take care of my physical health. As a result, I have made the difficult decision to go on disability. There are a few important things to be aware of:

- I am making this decision to change my relationship with First Baptist based on my oncologist's recommendation. He told me that now is the time for me to go on disability.
- I am **NOT** making this decision because of any change in my cancer. My cancer is stable and shows **no signs** of growth. We recently decided to take a break from treatment.
- The reality is that while I know what to do, what steps to take, my body does not currently have the energy to carry out those steps. First Baptist needs, and deserves, a pastor with the energy to lead us to the next stage in our journey.

For the past few years, we have talked about Riding the Wave of the Spirit of God. The Spirit makes the waves, and like a good surfer, we get on and ride until the wave ends. Anyone who has stood on the beach knows, when one wave ends, another is right behind it.

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The next wave in my relationship with First Baptist could be very exciting. While I may not have the energy to complete all the duties of your pastor, I do believe I have much to offer. I am excited about the way we have grown our ministry to the broader community. The work with the local clergy has been an example of capital K Kingdom work.

- As appropriate, I am eager to be a part of what God is doing in and through us.
- My goal would be to use my gifts as a layperson to help grow the ministry and outreach of First Baptist.
- My involvement in ministry would be at the invitation of church leadership and any future pastor.

It has been one of my greatest honors to serve as pastor of First Baptist. God has been very gracious to us, and we have seen God do amazing things in our midst. However, I believe that our brightest days lay ahead of us.

Sincerely,

Pastor Dan Nicewonger

The Journey Continues:

I thank you for your prayers and support over the past seven years. When I was first diagnosed, my oncologist told me, "Your job is to stay alive until they come up with a treatment that can cure you."

Over the past five years, we have tried different treatments with varied results. In late August, I will be traveling to the University of Rochester hospital for a few days.

It is a fact-finding mission. I will be undergoing multiple tests and meeting with a team of doctors who specialize in liver transplants. If everything goes well and I am accepted into their program, there is the potential I could receive a new liver.

The journey to a new liver would be a long one...but it could transform the reality of what life looks like for me.

I thank you for praying that God would grant us wisdom as we walk this journey.