



# Frederick

Church of the Brethren

August 18, 2016

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We write you to communicate a transition that is now occurring at FCOB. We have just received the resignation of our beloved Pastor Brian Messler effective, October 30th. It is with deep personal loss coupled with great expectation that we release Brian to fulfill his call from the Lord to serve as a senior pastor at one of our sister churches in Ephrata, PA. Pastor Brian's letter of resignation accompanies this letter and can be found on the other side of this communication. Our loss is deep because we love Pastor Brian and he has served us well. Our expectation is great because the great God in whom we serve is able to provide, guide and supply for all of our needs as promised in Philippians 4:19. *"And my God (our God) will meet all of our needs according to the riches of His glory in Christ Jesus."*

The Leadership Team and Pastor Gene met on August 16<sup>th</sup> and officially received Brian's letter and unanimously supported Pastor Brian's decision to follow God's leading to take the next step in his calling as a senior pastor. This was not an easy or a quick decision for Pastor Brian. He has been seeking the Lord during this past year for guidance. He has continued to seek counsel from Godly advisors and friends. He has determined and we have confirmed that this is God's call for Pastor Brian. We are also deeply appreciative that he waited to finalize his candidacy at another church until Pastor Paul had left successfully and that Pastor Gene could be with us to guide us and encourage us during this transition. This has displayed servant leadership and a deep respect and love for all of you here at FCOB. We thank Brian for his sensitivity and for waiting on God.

The process, the date, and the time of how we'll honor and celebrate Pastor Brian's service will all be announced soon. The Leadership Team has asked Pastor Gene and Paul Derstine to examine the gaps and the needs that Brian's leaving has created to propose a new leadership structure to meet the needs of the body of Christ here at FCOB. There will be an FAQ document provided for the entire congregation next week that will be posted on the FCOB website. In addition, there will be a special announcement from the Leadership Team at all services this Sunday.

Pastor Gene met with all the staff this past week and taught from I Corinthians 3:1-9 and reminded everyone that this is Christ's church and we are all servant leaders. Although pastors and church leaders serve important roles they are only servants who serve a God given task for God's purpose in God's field for God's season of growth. Remember that it is God who makes things grow (I Corinthians 3:7), and it is God who prunes His vine (John 15:2). God is responsible for the blooming as well as the pruning.

Please keep Pastor Brian, The Leadership Team, and our entire Congregation in your prayers.

In His Strong Grip,

Tom Simmons  
Leadership Team Chair

Gene Heacock  
Intentional Interim Senior Pastor

*A Place of Welcome*

To my precious brothers and sisters in Christ,

It is with a deep sense of gratitude, sadness, and anticipation that I share with you my resignation as your Associate Pastor for Worship and Witness. I have received and accepted a call to become the Senior Pastor at the Ephrata Church of the Brethren in Ephrata, PA. My last Sunday with you all will be on October 30, 2016.

For the last 12 years, I have had the privilege to partner with you all in the ministry of Jesus. You have been formative in my growth as a pastor, person, and friend. I cannot thank you enough for your patience, guidance, admonition, encouragement, and love throughout this time together. I have been blessed with the opportunity to walk alongside many of you in very special and meaningful ways, and continue to be awed by your dedication to sharing the love of Jesus with passion.

In addition to the multitude of people I have had the pleasure of serving alongside, I have a deep respect for the FCOB staff and pastoral staff, both past and present. I have been amazed at their faithful commitment to Jesus and the church. They have helped me grow, pushed me beyond my comfort zone, and have taught me valuable lessons in life, love, and discipleship. I am truly grateful for how they surrender to Jesus, are led by the Spirit, and praise God for all He has done.

Friends, I have been praying for clarity through these last couple of years, and the clarity He has given now requires me to have courage. So I step out in obedience, trusting that the Lord has me, and us, in the palm of his hands. I step out in faith for God's call upon my life, believing that if this is His plan for me in this season, it is also his plan for this church that I love so much. For the sake of our love for the Lord and his church, I ask for your prayers, support, and encouragement as I embark on this exciting and challenging call to shepherd the people of God in Ephrata.

May God truly bless you – in all that you do – for His glory and good.

Your Brother in Christ,

Pastor Brian