

June 24, 2012

[REDACTED]

Brothers:

Nearly a year ago both of you stood before the congregation and outlined a plan for the future of Singing Hills Christian Church.

Your plan focused on nurturing our church relationships within smaller share groups. You spoke to us about "closing the back door" by working harder at integrating new members into the congregation through these small groups. In your plan you also restructured our worship times and adult Sunday school to better accommodate our youth program and make it easier for them to go to class and attend church with their parents.

In implementing this plan you told us that each of your relative strengths and weaknesses would cooperate and complement the other's as you worked together and supported one another and the other staff members in their various ministerial activities in service to the Lord and the Singing Hills body.

This vision of a symbiotic relationship, this synergy the two of you would create, had the potential to be dynamic and powerful. That prospect filled the congregation with excitement, joy, and anticipation as we looked forward to seeing your plans come to fruition for God's glory and for the spiritual growth of His church.

The purpose of this letter and our conversations with each of you is to reflect back to you a different image – the image we have seen and continue to see on a daily basis since that day last summer when your presentation was made.

Your promised spirit of cooperation has not been forthcoming. Instead, it has been replaced by divisiveness. Each of you have participated in this activity and your mutual effort has proven to be destructive to the staff you serve, to the volunteers who look to you for instruction and inspiration as they work to support the church, and to the general congregation that reflects your personality and attitude as they interact with one another each week. In other words, if you think your lack of cooperation and apparent enmity has not been noticed by all concerned, we ask you to reconsider. Divisiveness is an infection that produces factions and quarrelling within the church. It promotes disunity and ultimately splits the body.

As you know, we continue to experience financial challenges at [REDACTED]. It would seem irresponsible to ask the congregation to give more to support basic expenses while at the same time being asked to accept less and less due to your mutual lack of productivity as you remain entrenched in separate and exclusive ministries.

Brothers, this cannot continue.

Please consider Jesus' words in John 15. He commands his disciples to love one another as He has loved us. He says this in the beginning of the passage, and reiterates it at the end. Jesus implies that the absence of this love equates to a dead branch that is pruned away from the vine.

The greatest manifestation of Christ in us is His love. This message of loving God and loving each other is the foundation of your individual ministries, that much is known. We have heard both of you speak these words from the pulpit at [REDACTED]. From your actions, are we to draw the conclusion that the relationship the two of you have with each other in the context of your service to Christ at Singing Hills is somehow excluded from Jesus' command?

For nearly two months we have conducted interviews with staff, volunteers, individuals, and even some share groups, and spent many hours in heartfelt prayer in our eldership meetings and in our personal times with the Lord. We conclude that your divisive relationship can no longer be allowed to continue. For your sake and for the sake of the body of Christ at [REDACTED] it will not. Until today our appeals to you to work together harmoniously have been on an informal and individual basis. Today we come to you as the eldership to formally require that each of you:

- take time for personal reflection without discussion or input from others, and consider the role you have each played in this matter. Our prayer is that each of you will seek God's will and forgiveness from Him and from each other;
- come together to begin the process of building a truthful, respectful, enduring, transparent, and productive relationship that will allow you to serve the body and one another in humility;
- try to work out your differences as unto the Lord who ultimately is the only one worthy and capable of judging our hearts;
- prepare a document with a plan of reconciliation and teamwork to present to the elders; one which you both agree to and sign in good faith;
- consider every aspect of this matter strictly confidential between the eldership and you;

On a day during the week of July 9<sup>th</sup> through July 16<sup>th</sup>, the six of us will come together and you will share your new plan with us so that we may consider how to best move forward. At that time we will affirm your specific job descriptions and responsibilities and discuss our expectations and the measures of your progress in the months to come.

If the two of you are either unwilling or unable to resolve this matter in a way that embraces the intent and the example of our Lord Jesus Christ, then we will expect your resignations—as you have each indicated a willingness to give us if necessary. In whatever choice you make, please know we will continue to love and care for each of you as our brothers in Christ. But also know, that you will either both stay at [REDACTED] working together in loving harmony or you will both leave [REDACTED] to pursue new opportunities more suitable to your individual ministerial goals.

Also, please know we are mindful of our responsibility in this matter. Our failure to properly acknowledge this issue and act decisively in a more timely way has in part, brought us to this point today. We humbly ask your forgiveness as we continually ask the same from God and for His will and way to be shown to us for His glory and our spiritual completion. We stand prepared to assist you in any way you need in order to support the both of you in reconciling your ministries.

We take this action with the heaviest of hearts, but with the greatest hope that two profoundly wonderful men of faith and practice that we dearly love and honor can figure out a way to sincerely come together and work together so the body builds up to be the fullness of Christ on the earth.

In deep love, concern, and respect,  
Your elders and brothers in Christ.

June 24, 2012

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Brothers:

Each of you is receiving the enclosed letter this morning. Please read and reflect upon it carefully. Within forty-eight hours from now we would appreciate a joint email from the two of you that simply indicates that you either will or will not proceed with the process specified in the letter. Your honest and sincere response is deeply appreciated.

Please know we will be earnestly praying for you during this time.

With love and respect,