



Hello FFC Family!

My name is Dan Rea and I'm coming to you with an opportunity to bless our Pastors. This summer at the EFC-ER Yearly Meeting, a "Bless Your Pastor" initiative was unveiled and encouraged. It immediately gained support from the conference delegates and our Elder body. In its simplest form, it involves taking a special offering over a period of time to be distributed to our Pastoral staff which consists of Pete Fowler, Andy Black, and Mike Barnes. This opportunity to bless our Pastors also comes at a time when our church is celebrating some milestones in employment.

The month of September marks the 20th anniversary of Pastor Pete and Mandy arriving at our church as newlyweds to work with youth. It doesn't seem possible that it has been 20 years but we are so thankful that God answered the prayers of a congregation in need and brought this amazing couple into ministry here at Salem First Friends! We are so thankful that God shaped and molded a young man into the lead Pastor we have today! God is so good!

September also marks the ten-year anniversary of Andy Black coming to our staff to lead worship. We certainly have been blessed by Andy's ability but even more so by the heart he has to serve Jesus and to encourage us to do the same. Andy, along with his wife Amy, and two daughters have certainly been a blessing to our church family!

The third member of our pastoral staff, Mike Barnes, has also been working with our church for ten years. Mike came on board ten years ago as a youth intern while attending Malone University. Mike then became full-time in May of 2013 working with our youth. Since that time, Mike has continued his education and in addition to youth, has been involved in sports ministry and church planting. Congratulations to Mike also for making a good decision and marrying Bethany a few weeks ago!

We would like to encourage each of you to help celebrate these milestones and help bless our Pastors. You can do this in two different ways and I hope you will prayerfully consider doing both.

The first way is to write a note, send an email or a card simply saying thanks for their service to the community of Salem and Salem First Friends. I ran across a quote this week from Mother Teresa that said "Kind words can be short and easy but their echoes are truly endless". **Your words of encouragement are so important!**

The second way is to contribute to a special offering during the month of September that will be distributed among our three pastors. You can do this by designating the funds "Bless your Pastor" on an envelope, or there will be a giving option online marked "Bless Your Pastor."

We would like to distribute any funds collected on the last Sunday of September, so please don't miss this opportunity to help say thank you and express our love and support for our pastoral staff.

In closing I would like you to consider the words of Paul from Hebrews 3:13, "But encourage one another day after day as long as it is still called Today".

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*Gathering in Community
Growing in Christ
Going into the World*

Blessings,

Dan Rea
First Friends Church Clerk of the Meeting