

Questions from FCCH

Answers by Rev. Jeremy A. McKeen

1. What are the primary roles of a Senior Pastor?

The Scriptures of both the Old and New Testaments provide a compelling and controlling picture for the role of an ordained minister—that of a pastor or shepherd (Ecclesiastes 12:11, Jeremiah 23, Ezekiel 34, Acts 20:28, 1 Peter 5:1-4, etc.). This comprehensive metaphor and title comes directly from the type of spiritual leadership that Jesus, as the Great/Chief Shepherd of the sheep (Hebrews 13:20, 1 Peter 5:4), provides his flock (John 10:1-18).

(a) The first responsibility of any Senior Pastor is to personally and faithfully follow Jesus (Galatians 2:20, Acts 20:28, 1 Timothy 4:7-16). We must start, as Paul says, to “Pay careful attention to ourselves” (Acts 20:28). The personal integrity, faith, and relational home-life of the Senior Pastor are paramount to his overall leadership in the Church of God. The pastor should be able to confidently and humbly say, “Imitate me, as I am of Christ” (1 Corinthians 11:1). We should seek to live Christ-centered, others-focused, communitarian lives that are worthy of imitation. We should be the first at the cross, the first to admit when we’re wrong, the first to pursue peace, the first to serve the needy, and the first to do what is hard and necessary for the sake of the flock.

(b) The second responsibility of any Senior Pastor is to oversee the spiritual health of the flock that the Holy Spirit has entrusted to his or her charge (Acts 20:28). Under the loving direction of Pastor Jesus—the true Head of the Church—the Senior Pastor is responsible (along with the older elders, 1 Peter 5:1-5) to execute five primary roles: to lead, feed, care, protect, and equip the sheep.

1. *Leading the Sheep:* The Senior Pastor should seek to lead the flock of God to the green hills of spiritual maturity (doctrine, devotion, and duty). The “leadership destination” for every minister should be “to present everyone mature in Christ” (Colossians 1:28). This starts “in deed” by living a life of mature faith that is worthy of imitation, and then “in word” by leading the people from the pulpit and through personal discipleship.

2. *Feeding the Sheep:* The Senior Pastor should seek to feed the flock of God through the faithful preaching of the Word and the administration of the sacraments. The great watchword for the pastoral ministry is “Feed my sheep” (John 21:17). The pastor should seek to teach God’s Word in a way that feeds everyone at the table. The teaching ministry should nourish newer and older believers alike, and be taught in a way that encourages Christians to invite their non-Christian connections to church.

3. *Caring for the Sheep:* The Senior Pastor should seek to care for the flock of God through regular prayer, visitation, and a more “priestly” approach to the ministry. The pastor should provide (along with the help of other leaders) “CPR” for each member—Cared for, Prioritized, and Respected. This involves practicing the ministry of humble presence and generous hospitality.

4. *Protecting the Sheep:* The Senior Pastor should seek to protect the flock of God from false teaching and false teachers through doctrinal faithfulness and loving church discipline (Matthew 18:15-20, Acts 20:18-35, 1 Corinthians 5:1-13). Teaching right doctrine, and how to spot false doctrine, is a critical part of the pastoral role. Along with this, comes the process of church discipline that seeks to promote the purity and peace of Christ’s church.

5. *Equipping the Sheep*: The Senior Pastor should seek to equip the flock of God for the work of ministry (Ephesians 4:12). The pastor needs to regularly encourage/exhort the congregation to use their spiritual gifts to build up the body. This involves recruiting, training, empowering, and deploying the saints to serve the needs of the body, as well as the world around them.

2. Please describe your style of leadership and administration.

I would identify my leadership style as “servant/coach/candid.”

Servant Leadership: I desire to be a slave to Christ alone but a “servant-of-all.” I try not to be enslaved to the fear of man but at the same time to lead in a way that puts other’s needs above my own. This is not a “technique,” but rather a longing to make life easier for others and to be a blessing to them.

Coach Leadership: I enjoy identifying, nurturing, and empowering the unique gifts of each person on a team. I love to help others achieve their goals and dreams. I want to bring out their best.

Candid Leadership: I freely admit my weaknesses and need for Jesus, and I seek out the input and help from others. I love to learn from people. Vulnerable honesty is the best way to build relational trust.

My style of leadership is shaped by four values that I believe Jesus modeled for us as a leader.

1. *Clear and focused on his objective* (The will of God),
2. *Humble / Loving in his approach* (Servant-minded),
3. *Taught by word and deed* (Clear Direction) and
4. *Equipped his followers to carry his mission forward* (Team-Oriented Empowerment)

My style of leadership, combined with these four values, will guide me to regularly bring the team I am working with together to ensure that we all understand what "the will of God" is for us (goals/mission). I'll also need to reinforce (mainly by example) a willingness to serve others and think of others before myself and expect this from each team member (ethos/values). Additionally, I'll need to provide regular direction/coaching through word and deed (strategy/vision) and then make sure that I equip and empower each team member to deploy his or her gifts in a way that builds up the organization and furthers the mission (resources). Four questions need to be regularly answered: 1. Where am I trying to lead my team? 2. How am I trying to serve my team? 3. What direction do I need to give my team? 4. How can I better resource and utilize my team?

3. How has your theology changed/developed in the past five years?

I want my theology to be continually reforming to Scripture. Over the past five years, there have been several “tweaks” or adjustments in my views on eschatology, church government, and spiritual gifts. However, the most significant change has been seeking to involve more women in the ministry of the church. After a careful study of Scripture and many resources germane to the subject, I believe that qualified women should be encouraged to use their gifts in the shepherding and diaconal ministry of the church. Regardless of the exact form that this takes, women should be encouraged to use their leadership gifts in a comprehensive way to bless the church. In the home, I believe that the Bible calls for the husband to love his wife with sacrificial and humble leadership and for the wife to love her husband with respectful and humble submission (Ephesians 5:22-33, 1 Peter 3:1-7). The doctrine of gender roles within the church and the home should not divide like-minded believers. Therefore, I deeply respect my brothers and sisters who disagree on these matters, and my main focus is always to maintain the unity that we share in the bond of peace.

4. Are there “non-negotiable” doctrines for you, and are there doctrines that need special emphasis today?

I have read FCCH’s Statement of Faith and believe that these ten beliefs faithfully capture my “non-negotiable” doctrines that make up “our common salvation” as summarized in the Apostles’ Creed. However, I would need further clarity in the question to be able to expand on this more faithfully. For example, I’m not sure if these “non-negotiable” doctrines are the doctrines that I would need for a church to hold to or allow me to teach, in order for me to consider ministry there. Or, are these doctrines what I believe every member in the church should agree to. If it is a version of the former, then the following three doctrines are important to me in considering where to minister.

Reformed: I humbly and joyfully believe in the doctrines of grace (most commonly referred to as TULIP). However, I try to teach these doctrines as I come across them (not making them a “hobby horse”). I always try to teach them in a very winsome and relevant way with an eye for the skeptic. In short, I’m Reformed, but I’m not mad about it. I’m a TULIP(ER)—believing strongly in evangelism and human responsibility. I believe that sound Bible-believing Christians can differ on these doctrines and that these “higher doctrines” should always be taught in a very careful, down-to-earth way.

Covenantal: I am covenantal in my understanding of the Bible and the Church. For me, this means that there has only been one plan of salvation communicated by God through the one covenant of grace running throughout the Old and New Testaments. In short, Noah, Abraham, Ruth, Esther, etc. are my brothers and sisters in Christ. I also believe that offering household baptism (the sign given to a believer *and* his or her household, Acts 16:14-15) is an important practice that communicates a proper understanding of covenant life within the church and nurtures faith in our children. I am open to doing infant dedications alongside infant baptisms as long as the church understands the teaching of household baptism and the families choosing a dedication are doing so in a thoughtful and prayerful way.

Amillennial: I seriously debated on whether or not to put this down as a non-negotiable, because I do not believe that the leadership and membership in a church need to agree on eschatology to lead and live well together. However, I included it because, in considering a church, I would need to know that I have the freedom in the pulpit to teach my views regarding these matters. I currently hold to a partial-preterist, optimistic amillennial position.

I believe the three doctrines that need special emphasis today are: The inspiration and authority of the Bible, a biblical view of marriage and sexuality, and a theology of the church and healthy church life. After a decade in pastoral ministry, I have seen many negative consequences if a person does not have a biblical view of Scripture, church, and gender identity/roles.

5. What is your view on the role of women in ministry?

This was touched on already in question 3, but let me add a bit more here. I believe that “woman” (Gr. *gynē*) in 1 Timothy 2:12 could rightly be translated as “wife,” as is the case in the parallel passage of 1 Peter 3. In my opinion, there is more evidence to see this passage as referring to gender roles in the home rather than women’s roles in the ministry. The trajectory of the New Covenant is expansive in nature, and I believe this expansion can involve women utilizing their gifts in the public teaching ministry of the church. As Peter proclaimed, “In the last days...your sons and *your daughters* shall prophesy” (Acts 2:17, italics mine).

6. Describe your approach and involvement in resolving conflicts within the church.

This is a very important topic—one that could easily be underestimated. I say this because Jesus taught us that one of the distinguishing marks of every genuine believer is being a peacemaker (Matthew 5:9). Furthermore, a key mark of a healthy church is love for one another and close fellowship between one another (1 John 1:3; 2:10). Unfortunately, many folks decide to leave a church strictly because of some unresolved conflict—either with the leadership or other members/attendees. In many cases, their departure could have been avoided if the conflict was handled in a biblical way.

Therefore, I believe the Senior Pastor should be very sensitive to conflict arising in the church. As a minister of reconciliation, he should never take a passive approach to conflict in the church. If the conflict is between the Senior Pastor and others in the church, the pastor should proactively pursue peace by looking for anything that he could have done wrong and being quick to apologize. If the conflict is between others in the church, depending on the severity of the case, the pastor should seek to hear from both parties and use the aid of other leaders to try and bring about forgiveness, reconciliation, and healing.

7. How do you hold church members accountable and how do you respond to personal criticism?

The power of the church is spiritual. At no time, should the church engage in physical actions to achieve member accountability. In my current denomination (PCA), church members take certain vows when joining the church. One of these vows specifically includes “submitting to the discipline of church.” Practically, this may work itself out in the following way: If a church member is said to be out of accord with the core teachings or behaviors of Christianity, then the case is carefully looked into by the member’s primary care shepherding team (made up of at least one elder and deacon). If the shepherding team determines that dangerous beliefs or sinful behaviors are in fact present, then the disciplinary process of Matthew 18 commences.

This begins by giving a loving word of admonition to this member. If this is not heeded, then two or more people should bring the same word of admonition to this member. If this is not heeded, then the member should be asked to meet with the elders. Upon review of the case, if the member is not deemed repentant, then he or she is forbidden to take communion (either definite or indefinite suspension). After the determined time of suspension, the member is asked to revisit the elders, and the open case is reviewed. If there are signs of repentance, then the case is closed and the member is restored to the sacraments and full fellowship within the church. If there are no signs of repentance, then the member is excommunicated from the fellowship. In taking these steps of discipline, it should be noted that the church is not “doing” anything *to* the member, but is rather “declaring” where the member stands with God in the spiritual realm.

I try to respond to criticism out of my security in Christ. This enables me to do three things: 1. *Thank the Lord*. There should be a grateful attitude for how every criticism will be used in my sanctification. I believe that the Lord uses every criticism, no matter how unfounded, to produce in me greater patience, humility, and dependence upon him. 2. *Seek to Learn*. Because I’m prone to error and blindness, there should be an immediate assumption that the criticism is true, or at least partially true. I want to discover any merits in the criticism. 3. *Try to Change*. If the criticism is merited, then I will apologize and take steps to change. Either way, I will keep an eye out for the stated problem.

8. Describe your experience in supporting missions in your current and/or previous churches.

I love this topic because missions has always been at the heart of our church. After the first month of our church plant, in September 2009, we had already identified our first full-time missionary who was trained and sent out from our congregation and is still currently serving with his family in Panama. Each Sunday, we pray for our missionaries in our church service. And over the years, I have led and taught four short-term missionary teams to Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia, and Mexico. I have mentored and sent out full-time missionaries currently serving in such places as India and the Middle East. I have also trained and deployed one full-time church planter who is currently planting the second PCA church in the West Palm Beach area. Lastly, we established an active Missions Committee that coordinates our Missions events and actively supports our many missionaries on the field.

9. What have you learned in your current (or most recent) church that has made you a more effective pastor?

The possible answers to this question are endless. I feel like I'm learning new things every day that are helping me to pastor more effectively. Two of the most important lessons are as follows:

1. Be Proactive: I have learned that one of the defining qualities of any effective Christian leader is not waiting for things to happen, but working and praying for things to happen. Too many times, I have taken the passive route in a particular situation and it came back to bite me. For example, a couple in the church was experiencing a death in the family, but there was something important that I needed to share with them. I visited them at home and gave counsel and prayer regarding the death in the family, but I never brought up the issue because I wanted to "give them space." I was waiting for them to ask me about it "when the time was right." Well, the time was never right, and by not bringing it up, I discovered later on that it only added to the pain that they felt because they interpreted my silence as a lack of care. This was a great learning lesson for me. Instead of pulling back, I could have said something like, "I know this is a very difficult time for you, and I don't want to add anything to the difficulty, but if you would like to talk about the situation, I am happy to do so."

2. Treat the Patient and the Problem in Front of Me: Pastoral ministry can rightly be compared to the medical field (Luke 5:31). A physician goes to school and works hard to study the human body and all the medicines that are available to treat the various health problems that can occur. However, when physicians treat their patients, they don't pick whatever medicine they happen to be fascinated with or talk about the part of the human body that happens to interest them. No! This would be considered malpractice. They first determine the needs of the patient in front of them and then apply the medicine accordingly. Moreover, they want to eliminate more than the symptoms; they want to get to the root problem that is causing the symptoms to begin with. I have learned that the same is true in pastoral ministry. Too many times, in an effort "to keep moving" through the book of the Bible that we were studying, I failed to take certain pauses and breaks to treat the various problems (not the symptoms) that were negatively affecting our body. I have learned to be more sensitive to the particular needs of our congregation and to administer the medicine of God's Word accordingly.

10. Describe a “healthy church.”

I make a distinction between a “mature” church and a “healthy” church. For example, you can have a healthy child who is currently immature, but the health should eventually lead to maturity. Beyond the Reformers three marks of every true church (the faithful Preaching of the Word, the right use of the Sacraments, and the exercise of Church Discipline), the following are some distinguishing marks of a healthy church:

1. God-centered / Trinitarian / Christ-centered: A healthy church focuses on the greatness of the Triune God, not upon the greatness of fallen man. The church is not a self-improvement club with a spiritual TED talk. Rather, the enjoyment and glory of God should be the aim of the church (1 Corinthians 10:31, Philippians 4:4). People should sense, as they come into corporate worship or engage with the community, that these people are serious about God (1 Corinthians 14:25). Moreover, the person and work of Jesus Christ is magnified in the ministry of a healthy church (Colossians 1:18). The sign of a Spirit-filled church is that Jesus is preached (Colossians 1:28), worshipped (Matthew 28:9) and made much of in the community (John 20:28).

2. Eager to Learn and Eager to Love: A healthy church is a humble and teachable church. They are eager to reform their lives according to Scripture, not the other way around. They may not know everything that they should know, but there is a hunger for the Word (Nehemiah 8:1-3, Acts 13:15), a willingness to listen to it (Hebrews 5:11), and a commitment to search the Scriptures “to see if these things are so” (Acts 17:11). A healthy church is also a loving church (John 13:34-35). They may not be the most gifted church, but they pursue love and excel in love for God and love for others (1 Corinthians 13:1-14:1, Hebrews 10:24, 1 John 4:7-21).

3. Unified in Spirit and Active in the World: A healthy church is a community that seeks to maintain the unity that the Spirit has already established among them in the gospel (Ephesians 4:3). They humbly and diligently pursue peace with one another. However, this unity is not uniformity. The gospel brings people together from different social, economic, racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds (Acts 2:5-11). A healthy church is also an active church. In word and deed, the church should be zealous to spread the good news (Acts 8:4) and to do good works (Ephesians 2:10, Titus 3:14), starting with their neighbors (Luke 10:30-37) and reaching to the nations (Acts 1:8).

11. Describe the role of lay leaders (Elders, Deacons, etc.) in the church and your working relationship with them.

The two perpetual classes of office in the church are elders and deacons (Acts 6:1-7, 1 Timothy 3:1-13, Titus 1:5-9, James 5:13-18, 1 Peter 5:1-5).

1. Elder: Within the class of elder are the two orders of teaching elders and ruling elders (1 Timothy 5:17). Only those elders who are specially gifted, called, and trained by God to preach may serve as ordained teaching elders. The elders are pastors (1 Peter 5:1-5), not merely a board of directors. As such, they jointly have the government and spiritual oversight of the church, including teaching. They are charged to watch diligently over the flock exercising oversight and making decisions that promote the spiritual good of the particular church. They should visit the people in their homes, especially the sick. They should instruct the ignorant, comfort the mourner, nourish and guard the children of the church, set the believers a worthy example, and pray with and for the people.

2. *Deacon:* The office of deacon is not one of rule, but rather of sympathy and service both to the physical and spiritual needs of the people. The deacons are especially called to help people in times of need and distress (Acts 6:1-7). It is their duty also to develop the grace of liberality in the members of the church and to devise effective methods of collecting and distributing the gifts of the people (1 Corinthians 16:1-3). They shall also provide direction and care for the church's finances and property.¹

Beyond these two offices, there are a variety of lay-leadership roles that should be exercised for the building up of the church. These may include but are not limited to: Committees, Serve Teams, Spiritual-Care Teams, Community Groups, etc.

I work closely with the leadership of our church. I am the primary care shepherd for the officers and their families at our church. Our elders meet once a month, or more than that if a special meeting is called for. We communicate regularly through an app called GroupMe, and I seek to make a proactive connection with each family at least once a month. This may involve a home visitation, email, phone call, text message, etc.—anything that lets them know that I care and that I'm seeking their spiritual good. I personally interact with the deacon team as a whole on a week-by-week basis and the elders receive the deacon's monthly minutes to review any recommendations and/or action steps that are being taken. Overall, my working relationship with the elders and deacons is a close "partnership in the gospel" (Philippians 1:5) as we labor "side by side in the gospel together" (Philippians 4:3).

12. What are your worship style preferences?

I believe that the corporate worship of God begins with the Call to Worship and ends with the Benediction. The entire service is one of worship in which music should play a central part. God's people have always been a singing people. As Christians, we don't chant or whine; we sing for joy (Psalm 81:1; 95:1, etc.). The particular style of music is not the most significant aspect to me as long as is done with excellence and the following are sought after:

A Gospel-centered Atmosphere: There should be a joyful reverence in the atmosphere of New Covenant worship that is brought about by the gospel. Because of the amazing grace of God in the finished work of Christ, worship should be, "a festal gathering" (Hebrews 12:22). There should be a sense of coming home to a family and party that is filled with joy (Luke 15:25). However, because we are coming before the King of Kings, there should be reverence and awe (Hebrews 12:28). The music should seek to lead the congregation to experience this unique tension between child-like confidence and awe-inspired reverence before God.

A Story Being Told: The ministry of music should follow the trajectory of the gospel narrative. Each Sunday, the songs that are selected should have a flow and order to them that reflect an "Isaiah 6" movement. They should begin with exalting the majesty and grandeur of God. Seeing the holiness of God naturally leads to seeing the sinfulness of man. This leads us into a time of prayerful confession and assurance of pardon. Coming out of this should be songs that celebrate the mercy and grace of Jesus. Musically, this needs to be the most Christocentric time of the service that prepares us to hear God's Word from a place of deep rest in the finished work of Jesus. The communion and closing songs should be more thematic with the particular message that God has for the people that day and capture the commitment of the people. The closing song should be a song of commitment or sending as we say to God like Isaiah did, "Here I am! Send me" (Isaiah 6:8).

¹ These descriptions of elders and deacons have been adapted from the PCA's Book of Church Order.

A Singing Congregation: Following the instruction found in Ephesians 5:19 to, “address one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs,” I want two things to take place during our time of singing: 1. The congregation singing loudly (not mouthing or whispering the songs), and 2. The congregation hearing each other singing the songs. To accomplish this, many things are involved: Volume of music, familiarity with songs, arrangements that encourage singing, and planning the type and number of selections well. In short, the music should be crafted in a way that leads to robust congregational singing.

13. Please describe how you came to faith, as well as your upbringing and your current family.

My Upbringing: I grew up in the woods of Southern New Hampshire and was raised in a strong Christian home. Even though we were very poor (we didn’t have electricity in our house until I was in 4th grade.), because of my parent’s commitment to Christ and one another, we were very rich. I learned to appreciate the small gifts of life, the love of family, and the value of hard work.

My Conversion: However, it wasn’t until my junior year of college that I became born again. When I went away to Florida Southern College, I could immediately see the joy that the Christians had on my campus, but I didn’t understand how they got it. I thought they got it by trying to be good enough and following all the rules. So, my junior year I tried as hard as I could to be good. I renounced the outward acts of worldliness, and I was able to fake out a lot of people, but I knew I wasn’t faking out God. Deep down, there were so many things that I still struggled with.

There came a day when I was broken and undone, and I kneeled by my bed in my dorm room and cried out to God, “I can’t do this. This Christian life that you’re asking me to live is impossible. What am I missing?” As God is my witness, I flipped open my Bible and immediately read Philippians 3:9, “*And be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes through the law.*” I thought, “Wait a minute, that’s exactly what I’m trying to get. But the very thing I’m trying to achieve is what Paul says he doesn’t want.” The lightbulb came on for the first time. I was blind but now I could see. I realized that I had Christianity all wrong. God was not waiting for me to put together a perfect moral record and offer it to him; he had already put together a perfect moral record in Jesus and was offering it to me. That’s why Paul went on in the verse to say, “*...the righteousness from God that depends on faith.*” It all depends on faith, not my works! I was saved, and I was finally full of joy!

My Family: Second to my relationship to God, my family is my next priority. Based on the qualifications listed in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, I believe that my leadership in the home either qualifies me or disqualifies me for leadership in the church. Therefore, my family must come first. My gospel ministry must begin at home. I would rather be considered a great family man than a great churchman. In 2006, I married Lindsay, my college sweetheart. We have been faithfully and happily married for 13 years. Lindsay has always been my biggest fan and my greatest ally. She is behind me 100% and gracefully walks alongside me with the spiritual gifts of helps, mercy, and gift-giving to others. Lindsay and I try our best to integrate a date night and a day off into every week. In addition to this, we try to get away together for a week each year just the two of us to recalibrate our marriage and enjoy life together. These rhythms have grown our love and sustained us in the exacting work of church ministry. Lindsay and I have two wonderful children that I love with all my heart—Hannah (age 9) and Ezra (age 5). We have experienced five miscarriages. These losses have brought us closer together as a couple, and we have watched as God has been able to use our suffering to minister to many others. The inability to have a second child biologically also led us to adopt our son, Ezra. His adoption as a premature infant has been an integral part of our family's story of God's redeeming grace.

14. What are two areas you want to grow in professionally and spiritually?

Do I have to pick just two? This is hard because I have many areas that I want and need to grow in. I'm not sure if these are my top two in these areas, but here are two in each area that come to mind:

Professional

1. Networking: Over the past ten years of ministry, I have labored hard to reach the lost and care for the sheep. I have made those two areas my highest priority but sometimes to the point of neglecting the comradery and fellowship of other pastors and business leaders in the WPB area. In my next pastorate, I'd like to spend more time building relationships outside of my immediate circle of ministry influence. This will take time, especially because the first two years will need to be spent getting to know a new congregation, but I want to grow in the often-underestimated value of ministry and community networking.

2. Preaching: I am not satisfied at all with my preaching abilities. I believe I have a lot of room for growth. Particularly, I want to grow in my ability to connect with non-Christians, to provide rich theological connections for seasoned Christians, to preach with a smoother pitch and relaxed passion, to better discern when and how to incorporate levity and humor, and to make fresh connections to the person and work of Christ from the text. The list could go on.

Spiritual

1. Intercessory Prayer: I would say that my personal prayer life is healthy because it's regular, honest, and intimate. But an aspect of prayer that I want to grow in is the length of time that I give to praying for other people. It's embarrassing to admit, but I find it much easier to pray for myself than for others. However, recently, the Lord has given me a passion for intercessory prayer and has shown me the power and efficacy of it.

2. Understanding the Old Testament People: I feel like I have an above-average grasp of how the Old Testament connects to and points to the New Testament. However, I really want to grow in my understanding of the culture and history of the Old Testament people. I want to gain a better grasp on how the particular laws, prophets, kings, and stories connect to one another and covenant life back then (not just how they point to Christ now). I believe this understanding will strengthen my knowledge of God, faith in God, and appreciation for life and ministry under the New Covenant.

15. Why are you looking to leave your current position and why would you want to be the Senior Pastor at FCCH?

Truth Point Church (TPC) is thriving and going well. We received 75 new members in 2019 alone. The people are warm and so encouraging to my wife and I. Saying goodbye is going to cause them and us many tears. But in the words of one of my mentors, "The tears are one of the signs of a healthy church." For about a year now, I have felt a strong burden from the Lord that he has something different for our family. I have waited, fasted, prayed, and sought much counsel. I now believe that it is time for me to close this chapter of pastoral ministry at TPC and hand the church over to the next pastor who will water what has been planted (1 Corinthians 3:6). I do not consider this "leaving," but rather "going" and following the leading of our loving Shepherd.

As I mentioned in my cover letter, I believe God has given me three words to narrow down my target search: North, Historic, and Preaching. God is calling my wife and me north of Florida. More specifically, God is calling us to New England. I grew up in Southern New Hampshire, and I have a deep-rooted passion for the New England area. We also believe that God is calling us to minister long-term in a historical place of strategic influence for the Kingdom. I am a history buff and have a deep respect for the people, events, and facilities that have gone before us. Lastly, I am convinced that God is calling me to a place where my gift for the expositional and engaging preaching of the gospel can be used in a more comprehensive way. After reading the candidate profile for the next Senior Pastor of FCCH and other relevant documents, I wholeheartedly believe that your rich New England history, intellectual rigor, deep joy in God, emphasis on preaching, and heart to reach non-Christians with the gospel is a “cinderella fit” for me and the ministry that I would bring. I would be honored, humbled, and thrilled to join the FCCH community in a gospel-centered ministry that impacts the culture of Boston’s North Shore and reaches the world for Christ.