

RE: WALKING TOGETHER THROUGH THIS TRANSITION

Dear Saguaro Canyon Church Family,

Thank you so much for the love and grace you showed this past Sunday as I shared about the next season of my life and new call to ministry. I know an announcement like this can bring a mixture of emotions, questions, and even uncertainty, but I want you to know how much I appreciate your prayers, encouragement, and how you have walked with me and my family through the years.

As I shared Sunday, after much prayer, reflection, and conversation with my family, I have developed a strong conviction that the Lord is calling me into a new ministry direction. I believe He is leading me to devote the next season of my ministry to planting a network of house churches in Tucson centered on making disciples and multiplying leaders, while also writing books and resources that equip people to understand God's Word, think biblically, and follow Jesus faithfully.

As I pointed out on Sunday, this decision is not the result of conflict, disappointment, or discouragement. I love Saguaro Canyon Church, and I love our staff, our Elders, and the people who make this church what it is. Leaving my role as Lead Pastor is difficult because of how much I love you.

At the same time, I believe following the Lord's leading requires faith and obedience. I have encouraged you throughout my ministry here to follow God's leading and trust Him even when we cannot see everything ahead. I believe this is a moment when I need to do the same.

The anticipated transition will take place over the next **4-6 months**, with a hopeful final Sunday of **January 31, 2027**. Just to be clear, that date is not more important than the health of this church. I am committed to serving faithfully throughout the

transition and will remain as long as necessary to help ensure a healthy handoff, including staying until the next Lead Pastor is in place if needed.

Our Elders will lead the process of seeking the next Lead Pastor. I have complete confidence in their love for this church, their wisdom, and their desire to follow the Lord's direction. I will work closely with them throughout this process, and my desire is for us to handle this transition with clarity, unity, prayer, and great care.

I also want to remind you of something important: **Saguaro Canyon Church belongs to Jesus, not to me.** He has been faithful to this church long before I became your pastor, and He will be faithful long after my role changes. The mission hasn't changed. The gospel hasn't changed. God's Word hasn't changed. And Jesus is still building His Church.

I believe there are wonderful days ahead for Saguaro Canyon Church, and I am genuinely excited to see what God will do through you in the years to come.

I've included a **Pastoral Transition: Questions & Answers** below to address some of the questions you may naturally have. Please don't hesitate to reach out to an Elder or myself if you have additional questions or simply want someone to talk and pray with.

Thank you for trusting me, loving my family, and giving me the incredible privilege of serving as your pastor. I am deeply grateful for the years God has given us together.

I love you, and I look forward to walking through this next chapter together.

With deep love and gratitude,

Pastor Shannon

PASTORAL TRANSITION

Questions & Answers

1. Why is Pastor Shannon stepping away, and what will he do next?

After an extended season of prayer, reflection, and conversations with his family, Pastor Shannon has developed a strong conviction that God is calling him into a new ministry direction.

He believes God is leading him to plant a network of house churches in Tucson focused on disciple-making and multiplying leaders, while also writing books and resources designed to help people study God's Word, think biblically, pursue truth, and follow Jesus faithfully.

This decision is not the result of conflict, disappointment, or discouragement. It is a decision to follow what he believes is God's calling for the next season of his life and ministry.

2. Does this mean something is wrong at Saguaro Canyon Church?

No.

Pastor Shannon loves this church, its staff, its Elders, and its people. He believes Saguaro Canyon Church is in a good place and that God has wonderful things ahead.

The church is also **financially healthy and positioned well for the future**. This transition is not the result of a financial crisis or other problem that needs to be fixed at Saguaro Canyon Church.

3. When will Pastor Shannon leave?

The anticipated transition will take place over the next **4–6 months**, with a target date of **January 31, 2027**.

However, the target date is secondary to the health of the church. Pastor Shannon is committed to serving faithfully throughout the transition and will remain as long as necessary to help ensure a healthy handoff, including staying until the next Lead Pastor is in place if needed.

4. Who will be responsible for finding the next Lead Pastor?

The **Elders will oversee the transition and form a Lead Pastor Search Committee** consisting of:

- **Two Elders**
- **Three members from the congregation**

Together, this committee will prayerfully seek and evaluate candidates for the next Lead Pastor. The goal is to identify a biblically qualified, spiritually mature leader who is well suited to serve Saguaro Canyon Church and lead the church into its next season.

Once a candidate has been identified and the Search Committee and Elders believe he is the right person to serve as our next Lead Pastor, **he will be presented to the congregation and then voted on in accordance with the Saguaro Canyon Church Bylaws.**

Additional information about the search process will be communicated as the committee is formed and the process develops.

5. How should we respond as a church during this transition?

Pray, remain faithful, and stay unified.

Pray for Pastor Shannon and his family. Pray for the Elders and Search Committee as they seek the Lord's direction. Pray for the staff and for the person God is preparing to become our next Lead Pastor. We are not in a hurry, so we want to seek guidance from the Lord and be patient in the process.

Most importantly, continue to go **DEEPER IN CHRIST—BROADER IN LOVE—and FURTHER IN MISSION**, pursuing the mission God has given Saguaro Canyon Church.

6. What does this mean for the future of Saguaro Canyon Church?

We have every reason to move forward with confidence.

Saguaro Canyon Church does not belong to a pastor. **It belongs to Jesus.** He has faithfully led this church in the past, He is faithful today, and He will continue to lead us into the future.

A pastoral transition changes leadership, but it does not change our Lord, our mission, or our commitment to the gospel.

The chapter is changing. The mission isn't. Jesus is still Lord. And we believe the best is yet to come.

A Final Word

We recognize that transitions can bring questions and different emotions. We want to walk through this season with **honesty, grace, unity, prayer, and confidence in Christ.**

If you have questions that aren't addressed here, please reach out to one of our Elders or Pastor Shannon. We want to communicate openly and walk together through this important season in the life of Saguaro Canyon Church.