



## FROM PASTOR ROB

**Dear Church Family,**

**March 1, 2020**

I want to share with you a decision Rhonda and I have made. It's a decision we have prayed about and talked about more than any decision we have faced. It's one God began stirring in us over 4 years ago and since then, one God has repeatedly confirmed. God has used wonderful people, full of godly counsel along the way. I have made it a practice to always seek counsel around decisions especially a decision like this.

**I have decided, based on God's leading in my life, to retire from being the Senior Pastor of this tremendous church no later than June 2021.** It's a decision that is 100% based on my own initiative. I am perfectly healthy, there is no hidden agenda or problems, and as I said, this is hardly hasty.

A few years ago, at my recommendation, the elders began working on a succession plan. They appointed a succession planning team and over the last few years I have had the privilege of working closely with that team and the elders. I wish all churches could do this like we have done. It's been a wonderful process.

Most importantly, I want you to know that I love you, I love this church as much as any Senior Pastor could love a church. This has been a wonderful place to minister. You have changed my life, made me a better man and pastor. This fall will be my 26<sup>th</sup> year, but Rhonda has been here at WBC for 32 years. So this is very difficult for us. We have spent the bulk of our adult lives

here, we raised our children here, we buried our first two spouses here, our kids have gotten married here. For 5 years you prayed for and supported our oldest daughter and her young family as missionaries in a totally closed Muslim country. You are a great church, a wonderful church full of people deeply committed to the gospel and prayer. When I first came to Wheaton Bible Church and I stepped into our Wednesday night prayer meeting and heard these 80 year old men and women pray, I knew I was in the right church! Words can't express how much Rhonda and I love you and how much we have felt your love year after year.

In three months, I will be 67. I believe it is time to transition to younger leadership to take WBC into the great future God has in store for us.

Our plan is to retire 12-15 months from now—no later than June 2021. The 12-15 months is designed to provide continuity of leadership: it gives church leadership time to listen to you, to form a search committee and to conduct a prayer-based search for my successor.

In addition, I want you to know several important things. I will not pick my successor. That is not my role per the constitution of WBC. Rather, it is the responsibility of the leadership and membership of WBC. I will not be involved in the search process. The members of WBC are the ones who have the responsibility to vote on the Senior Pastor, so if you're not a member yet, I would encourage you to plug into our Growth Track and become a member of WBC.

Second, I will be retiring from my ministry as a Senior Pastor, but I will not be retiring from ministry. Instead, I will transition to global missions and assume a part time role with Greater Europe Mission where I have been the Chairman of the Board for the last 12 years.

Third, Rhonda and I will be relocating. Hopefully, some place warm! I will travel with GEM and Rhonda will continue to work as a pediatrician.

Finally, we must all remember that the most important name in this church is Jesus Christ. He is the head of WBC, not me. He will lead us, He will guide. He loves this church. But His is the only name that matters. Therefore, the most important thing you can do is pray, pray that God by His Spirit will do incredible things here at WBC, that this will be a unifying process and that God will make his will clear about who he has chosen to be our next Senior Pastor.

In Him,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rob Bugh".

**Rob Bugh**

**Senior Pastor**

Wheaton Bible Church

Iglesia del Pueblo

Tri-Village Church