

May 29, 2016

Dear Valley View Chapel Family,

Today is my last day as your Senior Pastor.

On December 1, 2003 I stepped through the door of "The Chapel" for the first time as your pastor. Though I expected God by His grace to grant a fruitful ministry, never in my fondest hopes did I dare to believe that our 12 ½ years together would be as wonderful as they have been.

As I have stated many times, shepherding a congregation of Christ followers is a great and solemn responsibility. You have made my God-assigned task a pure delight.

When I came to Valley View I had 2 prayer requests: that this would be my "last church" before retirement and that my ministry would benefit the people I have been called to serve. Thank you Lord for answered prayer!

Here's my only "regret": There are a lot of sermons swirling around in my head that I would like to preach but probably won't. But the Lord is good to have given me more than 42 years to mine the riches of His Word.

May I share two cautionary points?

Do not compare the next pastor to me. My successor will be *God's man* and he will bring to you gifts, talents, personality and priorities that will be the product of God's plan and purpose for the church. Support him with the same love and commitment that you have supported me.

It would be a negative mark on my 12 ½ years among you if any of you leave Valley View because I am no longer your pastor. The greatest honor any pastor can have is when the congregation remains faithful to the Lord and the local body of believers.

Be assured of the love and prayers of Emily and me in the exciting days ahead.

With joyful anticipation,

Pastor John

Philippians 1:3