

To: The Congregation of VBC  
From: The VBC Deacon Board

Subject: RECONCILIATION & CONTINUATION

To our Members and attending participants:

Our Deacon Board is made up of men who like you want to do what is right. This statement is true in each instance of the members that sit on the board and stand here on the platform today.

It has been our corporate objective to choose "right". We choose this knowing that in every aspect of the tasks we need to attend to we will not make everyone happy. But you have the correct understanding and expectation that we will be truthful in completing the actions required of us to best represent God's leading in conducting His business.

There is a distinct difference to this introduction if all you perceive we are men who are doing what they want to do to bring upon us all a "best because we say so" mentality. We acknowledge that there is a fine line, albeit distinct line, that separates these two operational models and an even thinner line in your minds if not appropriately addressed. We are re-dedicating ourselves to diligently serving in a manner that seeks to rightly divide truth, and act within the guidelines of that truth with transparency.

Part of this re-dedication has been demonstrated in our use of a communications plan to better inform you of our activities, the time invested in performing the actions required of us, and to ensure that you know we invite you to ask questions and get clarity on anything that is of a concern to you. Today's information is directly aligned to that objective.

Since our last update your Deacon Board has met two additional times; on the 9<sup>th</sup> and again on the 16<sup>th</sup> of July. We took for action the issues related to our financial commitments and how to appropriately sustain ministry given the lesser available resources we have to work with in our present state. We have given praise to God for your faithful and generous giving. Openly, we have commended and we applaud this assembly's *Samaritan heart*; giving without expectation of return, impacting across cultural difference and without reservation. You are doing not just the minimum; you are doing right in giving back to God to sustain our impact on the lives of others. We have enjoyed a renewed sense of purpose and unity in coming together and undertaking actions like our block party that has drawn people to demand of us an answer for our faith. You matter and you are working to make a difference in our community.

We are not completely out of what others would call "harm's way" or "the woods". We have now approved the use of our reserves to cover shortages in core budget areas. We have reassessed our planned non-core expenses to economize and not use those resources without due regard for knowing the value it will return. And we are taking a step of faith in agreeing to use those resources to ensure we can adequately care for a Senior Pastor and his family. We believe that we are close to being able to present a candidate qualified to lead us, capable to challenge us to change, and a Pastor willing to work beside us to reach

beyond our local corner boundary to let messy sinners, like we have been, experience the Good News of His love just as we have experienced it.

We believe that our Senior Pastor will help us reconsider and reassess the priceless gifts of His, of Christ's, accomplishments on the cross. Our Senior Pastor will help us remember that Salvation and Eternal Life through Jesus Christ are not cheap carnival trinkets or knock-offs as Satan's warfighters portray them. We expect a Senior Pastor who will invite us to change to be a place of refuge and healing for the spiritually hurting people. To be a place of uplifted hands and hearts in worship of our Lord that invites participation of all who enter this house of God. A place where people close to our church can find the spirit of God reflected in us toward them in ways that we have not recently thought imaginable. A place where dirty lives get clean and are pointed back out to the messy world we live in to impact another life for Christ. Accomplishing this will revitalize our giving and deepen our resources to ensure we can sustain our ministry without drawing from reserves. This may take some time but we believe it will come to pass.

This Deacon Board desires for us to keep this vision and pursue God's best. And we are invested to do our part to find the right place and right position to promote a course of action that is ours in following God's plan for His Church. We know that the right place and the right position is more often the place of submission and the position is on our knees asking for His discernment.

Church family, this group of men is not infallible. We recognize that actions taken by this board have directly and indirectly affected you. We may have seemed to act in haste and without forethought. We have likely made you to feel like collateral damage. It was never our intent to cause these outcomes. We were acting in respect to what we still believe was the correct path. However, we are here today to apologize for any hurt we may have caused. We desire to be a reconciled group of men serving for you and not perceived as a wrecking ball of unconcerned, egotistical power-mongers trying to have our way.

This has not been our intention but it may have been interpreted as our bent. And we request your forgiveness if that is how we have been seen. We acknowledge that the "collateral damage" has left some to sort through the rubble of lost relationships and lost fellowship. We may have damaged a trust that is already a fragile element in connecting with others.

We acknowledge that we can't take away the pain of those emotions and neither can we replace what has been your loss. But, we want to acknowledge that we regret that outcome. It was not, and it is not, our intention to cause chaos or to prolong the void/the absence of leadership in our ministry here at the corner of Ralston and Saratoga.

Further, we acknowledge that a step of reconciliation and a statement of desired agreement to continue to exercise our best efforts to represent you and to seek God's perfect plan for His church – this church, Ventura Baptist Church, is appropriate. We feel that it is best for us to take this step and make this statement even if it just one of you that might need to hear this report.

We are prone to error, likely to be wrong in some aspects of carrying out our duty, and perceived to be less than fully diligent in considering the outcome of various actions. But we are praying that this won't be the case and that God will use us in spite of our shortcomings.

Before you today stands a group of men that are dedicated to living life God's way; to reflect Christ in our actions, and to seek His way for our lives; His best for you. We desire to rightly divide truth, to be authentic, to add meaning and purpose with a sense of flexibility in the "how to do it" in reaching our Jerusalem, and rejecting that concept that "it's the way we have always done it". We ask for your forgiveness for any damage that we have caused to your spiritual and emotional spirit. We are genuinely sorry!

Lastly, we are announcing that on July 30<sup>th</sup>, Pastor Matt Keller and his family will be here to present their hearts concerning the potential role to lead this Church. We have quite a number of the Board who will be present to introduce him and his family to our people. Others of the board have pre-arranged business that will not allow them to share in that day. This is not a refusal to be present, it is simply our situation and if the circumstances change all will be present and attending as is our normal manner.

We have continued to seek God's appointment for our Senior Pastor. We have re addressed the proposed ballot to be used when an election is announced and when the vote for a nominee is taken. Our legal counsel is a constant guide in these matters. Further, we have an action to address and confirm our membership list. And we have not forgotten our pledge to readdress the matter of designated giving though it has been of a lower priority in our recent meetings.

Please continue to pray for our church...for God's church and his people. Pray for our Pastoral staff that has been bearing an incredible load. Pray for your Deacon's as we pray for you. And ask God to continue to bless and increase the giving that has sustained our operations.

If we can answer any question that may be on your heart, in your mind we will respectfully do so to the best of our ability.

In Him,  
Your VBC Deacon Board