

To our church family at Northwood,

It is with a heart overflowing with gratitude, humility, and profound joy that I write this letter to you today. As we stand at the threshold of a new season of ministry together, my spirit is moved by the deep love that Tonia and I share for this church family. For over two decades, Northwood has been our home—a place where we have grown in faith, built enduring relationships, raised our two children, and served the Lord alongside each of you. The privilege of walking through life with you all, in various ministry capacities, has been one of the greatest blessings of our lives.

First, I want to express my sincere appreciation for the tremendous foundation of ministry that Pastor Brian has faithfully led for over 20 years. His leadership has been a gift, establishing a legacy of faith and guiding Northwood to be the vibrant church community that it is today. We honor his service and look forward with great anticipation to God's continued work, building upon the strong foundation that has been laid.

My own journey toward vocational ministry began in an unexpected place: a foxhole in Iceland in 1990, while I was serving in the military. It was there in the challenging landscape, and with moments of reflection, that I first felt God's distinct call on my life—a call to serve Him and share His transformative truth with the world. That moment of surrender has shaped the trajectory of my life.

Responding to God's calling to be the next Senior Pastor of Northwood Church comes not from ambition, but from a deep love for this community that has grown over 21 years of invested life here. We have walked together through many challenges and triumphs, celebrated joys and shared burdens. In many ways, as I reflect on my love for you, I echo the words of the Apostle Paul in his letter to the Philippian church: "It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart, for whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of you share in God's grace with me. God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus." (Philippians 1:7-8, NIV).

Throughout my life, God has been using every experience—from my time in the military, to my experience with the FAA as a manager and developer of

leadership curriculum, to various ministry opportunities in the local church—to shape and prepare me for such a time as this. Through each and every environment and experience, God has consistently reminded me that the transformational truth of the Gospel truly changes everything.

As we grow in the reality of what Jesus has accomplished on our behalf, and then individually respond, our lives become a tangible expression of His love to a world in need. As the apostle Paul expressed so clearly in Galatians 2:20, "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." (NIV).

My heart's desire for Northwood Church is that every person who confesses Jesus as their Lord will grasp this liberating reality and live their lives with a singular focus, as the British missionary C.T. Studd once stated: "Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last."

May the impact upon our families, communities, and the world at large be powerfully realized as we all obediently respond to His call. I dream that Northwood will draw people from every walk of life, because they have experienced a tangible expression of Jesus and found in our community a place of hope, help, healing and a spiritual home. I truly believe that God has desires for Northwood's people that are far beyond our imagination, and Tonia and I live with great anticipation of God's continued work in our future together.

With love and expectation,
Robert Alexander