

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

A little more than seven weeks ago, I received an email from Pastor Ron Burcham asking me if I was open to a conversation about ministry at Risen Savior. The next day, we talked for over an hour about life and ministry, giftedness and dreams, family and culture. It was a beautiful conversation that began a season of prayer for my entire family that has been ongoing for the last seven weeks.

During this season of prayer, my family was blessed to visit Risen Savior to get a feel for that congregation and the community of Chandler, Arizona. We got to hear their vision and heart for ministry. What followed were countless conversations as a family and nights filled with little sleep but lots of prayer. Since receiving this call, I have done a lot of listening to our staff, leaders, and many of you here at Our Savior. I have also had great conversations with trusted friends, mentors, and our District President.

Every step of the way, we have been praying for absolute clarity about where God is calling us to serve and for peace with the decision that is now before us. This is not a decision that we have taken lightly but with great reverence and respect to each of these great calls that God has given us. I'm glad to say that God has given us crystal-clear clarity and peace that can only come from God.

After much prayer and conversation, I have accepted the call to serve as Pastor of Discipleship at Risen Savior. This decision is both exciting and sad for us as a family. We are excited to follow God to where we believe He is leading us, but this also means some hard goodbyes to people we love and a ministry that we have poured our hearts and souls into for the last four years. Your love, prayers and support in the coming months would mean the world to us.

At the same time, I recognize that this is difficult, maybe even surprising, news to hear. I can truly appreciate that there may be feelings of disappointment, sadness, even frustration. I still believe with all my heart that Our Savior has great days ahead. There is a strong team and gifted leadership in place that will lead you well into the future. There is a united vision for ministry that is far bigger than my leadership. God will guide you well and do awesome things even though the future may seem clouded by uncertainty at this moment. Please know that I am praying for you and will continue to pray for God's continued work at Our Savior. I will be working with the leaders of Our Savior and Risen Savior in the coming week to work out details and a timeline so that I can finish well my time at Our Savior.

I want to leave you with the words of Paul from Ephesians 3, "Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen." God is able, and God is with each of us every step of the way. May God fill each of us with His perfect peace.

God Bless,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Pastor Kevin Austin".

Pastor Kevin Austin