

Dear Church Family,

Thank you for the gracious way you all encouraged the Jones' as they seek God's will and direction in the next phase of their ministry. We should all continue to pray for them as they continue to spread the Gospel and knowledge of God's everlasting love for His people and those who have yet to accept it.

Just as the Jones' are moving into a new chapter of their ministry, we must now do the same. We are already working to move the church through the initial phase of this transitional time and I wanted to provide you with some details of what we are doing and will be doing in the days ahead.

Most immediately, we are working to fill the pulpit in the Sanctuary using a couple of different speakers to lead and challenge us this Thanksgiving and Christmas season. We have been in contact with the Georgia Baptist Convention (GBC) and they have assisted us in this important process. The scheduled speakers for the Sanctuary we have currently arranged are: Benny Pate (November 15th, December 6th, December 13th & December 20th) and Butch Butcher (November 22nd, November 29th & December 27th). Dr. Benny G. Pate serves the Georgia Baptist Convention as Specialist in Leadership Ministries. Prior to coming to Atlanta, Benny served as the Ministry Resource Consultant to the Southeast Georgia Region for five years. Butch Butcher was the church planter/pastor for Summit Baptist Church in Loganville for 14 years. He currently serves the Georgia Baptist Convention as Specialist in Church Planting.

The Deacons have appointed a special Transition Committee to advise and assist with finding an interim preacher. The committee consists of Mike McClain, Mitch Baker, Elaine Healan and Melissa Treadwell. Please be in prayer for each of these members as they serve the Lord and Mars Hill in this important role.

During this time of transition, the Deacon body will seek the guidance of the Georgia Baptist Convention (GBC) in establishing a focused long term vision and strategies for growing our membership through local missions and ministries that incorporate the long term vision of Mars Hill Baptist Church. It is my prayer that our collaboration with the GBC will provide actionable results by the end of the first quarter 2010.

If you have questions about the transition, we have established a new page on the church's website with information and also a way for you to submit questions and comments by e-mailing info@marshillbaptist.org. I also welcome your comments or questions directly to me, especially by letter or e-mail (georgewconley@bellsouth.net) as well, if you would prefer.

The church's constitution sets forth a process to follow to name a search committee to look for a new senior pastor. The Senior Pastor Search Committee will be formed in accordance with our constitution and bylaws and begin organizing, praying, and seeking the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit in the task for which they have been called. It is our plan that we incorporate the results from our work with the GBC into the search process. Please begin praying now for this important transitional time. As we move forward with this transition process, I will be providing you with further updates and details.

Even though we have a transition before us, the Lord has provided for us to continue excellence in ministry, in the teaching of His word and in building His kingdom. Mike Sarratt is a gifted leader and will continue to lead our Sunday services and assist in developing a vision to build the Lord's church. The rest of our staff serves so faithfully and effectively to partner with us as we serve the Lord. Please pray for all of our staff for their encouragement, strength, wisdom and protection as we work together in these days.

I know a transition can be uncertain and we all have many questions. As we move forward with the Lord together, we know that He is faithful. He has been faithful and has led us in the past. And, the Lord, our Shepherd, will lead us through this time as well.

In Christ,
Bill Conley
Deacon Chairman