



## *First Baptist Church*

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*Rev. Nathan R. Brooks. Pastor*

March 22, 2023

Dear First Baptist Church Family,

The Bright Beginnings Board has prayerfully determined that it is necessary to bring an end to our daycare ministry after nearly 21 years of service to the Bloomfield community. Our preschool program will finish the current semester and resume again in August for the 2023-2024 school year.

The childcare landscape in Bloomfield has changed significantly in recent years in ways that have both decreased the demand for and increased the difficulty of providing a sustainable childcare program.

While these challenges have naturally raised the question of financial viability, the more important question has been, "Is God calling us to continue this particular ministry?" From my vantage point, given the fervent prayers offered and the persistent efforts of the Bright Beginnings Board to make things work, the Lord's answer to that question is, "No."

Saying goodbye to a ministry we have loved and valued is difficult. Grieving the end of this ministry is appropriate and understandable. Many of you who are reading this have invested deeply in Bright Beginnings in various ways. I want to thank everyone who has supported our daycare ministry, especially all who have served on the Bright Beginnings Board. Your contributions have often gone unnoticed but have not been without impact. Thank you!

It is also appropriate at this juncture for us to acknowledge the profound work of the late Ms. Tammy Kirkman, who served as director of our daycare program for its first 16 years. Ms. Tammy was expert in her understanding of the childcare industry and unsurpassed in her love for the children she served.

In 2002, First Baptist Church said, "Yes," to a call from God to offer Christian childcare to our community. Our "Yes" resulted in hundreds of children experiencing childcare in a safe environment in which they learned about Jesus' love. It was a good "Yes." I'm glad we said, "Yes."

But that "Yes" also meant that we said, "No," to other potential ministries. Now that daycare is coming to an end, we may be able to say, "Yes," to many other ways to love our neighbors and advance the Kingdom of God. We have a fabulous and versatile facility, which will continue to house our preschool and food pantry, among other ministries. If we are determined to use this facility to the glory of Jesus Christ above all else, the possibilities before us are boundless.

Please join me in prayer for:

- *Our caregivers, who will be seeking employment elsewhere.*
- *Our children's families, who will be seeking alternative childcare arrangements.*
- *Our church, that we would be open to whatever facility uses the Holy Spirit may reveal to us.*

Thank you as always for your commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ and your love for First Baptist Church.

Grace and peace,



Nathan