



December 16, 2019

I am so pleased to be joining with each of you at First Baptist Wilmington for the next few months as we begin to pray, think, work and dream together during this most significant interim period. God shows up in surprising new ways during such times. I pray you will open your hearts and minds as we journey together towards a new day.

I have admired your congregation from a distance and your fine ministerial staff. I am so pleased to get to meet you and share our lives together first hand!

Some things you need to know about me; I am the father of Graham Ashcraft who is married to Amanda Hambrick Ashcraft and I am the grandfather to three amazing grandchildren, Levi Davis (5), Zane Porter (5), and Skyler Rae (3). The Ashcraft's make their home in the East Village in NYC and I find myself in NYC as often as possible as you can imagine!

I have been a senior minister for over 35 years and have worked in challenging, stimulating, and wonderful congregations in Texas, South Carolina, Florida and Virginia. I am a native Texan, however my loyalty rests with the University of Oklahoma football program!

Prior to losing my wife almost two years ago, I was the Pastor in the Interim with Greystone Baptist Church in Raleigh, North Carolina responsible for leading the congregation through their interim transition.

I live in beautiful Richmond, Virginia where I am on the Executive Coaching staff of the Bon Secours Health System. I also work with other businesses and congregations seeking to help them clarify and discover more fully their vision and mission.

I am a passionate fly fisherman, and love tinkering with classic automobiles in my leisure time.

I find great joy in leading congregations through transitions. The so-called "in-between time"- when one pastor leaves and before the new pastor arrives- is alive with possibilities. What "new thing" might God want to bring to fruition in this interim time?

I will be working closely with your Leadership Council over these next few weeks. I welcome this opportunity! The Council will be developing venues, large and small, for each of you to speak into this process as we build together a Congregational Profile and a Pastor Profile both designed to inform the Pastor Search Team in their work of finding a new Sr. Minister. The search for a new minister is a daunting task. It requires a thoughtful and prayerful congregation, seeking to do God's will every step of the journey.

I am excited to begin this work with you and among you and look forward to our meeting on January 12th! May you have a warm-filled Christmas upheld and wrapped in the arms of our loving God.

Peace,

Randy Ashcraft