

Pastor Appreciation Marriage Offering

Supporting US AGAIN: A Marriage Retreat for the Pastor and His Wife

September 2026

Dear Church Leaders and Conference Leaders,

Scripture places tremendous importance on the home of a pastor. When Paul gives the qualifications for spiritual leadership, he specifically points to the way a man leads and cares for his own household (1 Timothy 3:4-5). The health of a pastor's home and the health of his ministry are deeply connected.

As churches, we invest in our pastors. We provide resources, conferences, encouragement, and opportunities to strengthen their ministry. But there is another investment we cannot overlook: **we must also invest in the health of the pastor's marriage.**

Pastoral ministry places unique demands on a pastor and his wife. There are late-night phone calls, hospital visits, counseling sessions, funerals, meetings, sermon preparation, and the constant responsibility of caring for people. A pastor carries many of those burdens personally, and very often his wife carries them with him.

"Your ministry matters to us - and so does your marriage."

This October, during Pastor Appreciation Month, we are inviting our churches to receive a special Pastor Appreciation Marriage Offering to help strengthen and encourage the marriages of pastors across Ohio.

These funds will help underwrite **US AGAIN: A Marriage Retreat for the Pastor and His Wife, April 15-17, 2027, at the Berlin Grande Hotel in the heart of Ohio's Amish Country.** Our goal is to keep the retreat affordable for every pastoral couple and to provide additional assistance for pastors and wives who simply could not afford a weekend like this on their own.

Some of our churches are able to send their pastor and wife without difficulty. Others are not. Some pastors serve smaller congregations. Some are bivocational. Some churches are walking through financially difficult seasons. For some pastoral families, the expense of getting away for several days is simply beyond what their household budget can absorb.

We do not want finances to be the reason a pastor and his wife cannot attend.

This October, we are asking each church to consider three expressions of appreciation:

- 1. Bless Your Pastor.** Continue whatever your congregation normally does for Pastor Appreciation Month - a love offering, gift, meal, recognition, or other personal expression of gratitude.
- 2. Send Your Pastor.** Commit to helping your pastor and his wife attend **US AGAIN** in April. If possible, cover their registration, assist with travel expenses, and give them the time away without requiring vacation days.
- 3. Help Sponsor Another Pastor.** Receive an additional special offering that will help reduce the retreat cost for all couples and provide assistance to pastoral families who otherwise may not be able to attend.

This offering is not intended to replace your church's normal Pastor Appreciation gift or love offering. Please continue blessing your pastor and his family personally. This is an additional opportunity for our churches and conferences to work together to invest in the health of pastoral marriages throughout our state.

Imagine what could happen if churches across Ohio simply said, "We are thankful for our pastors. We believe their marriages matter. And we want to invest in them." Whether a church gives \$100, \$500, \$1,000, or more, every gift can help us care for the men and women who spend their lives caring for our churches.

A Challenge to Every Church and Conference

Do not simply tell your pastor you appreciate him. Bless him personally. Help send him and his wife. And, if God has given your church or conference the ability, help another pastoral couple attend as well.

**They spend their lives investing in us.
This October, let's invest in them.**

Thank you for loving and caring for those who have been called to shepherd our churches. Together, we can encourage pastors not only in their ministry, but also in the marriages and families that stand beside them.

Until His Return,



Ben Crabtree

Executive Director

Ohio State Association of Free Will Baptists

US AGAIN

A Marriage Retreat for the
Pastor and His wife



APRIL 15-17, 2027



BERLIN GRANDE HOTEL

IN THE HEART OF

Amish Country Ohio

YOU SPEND YOUR LIFE POURING INTO OTHERS.

You counsel marriages.
You answer the phone.
You carry the burdens.
You prepare the sermons.
You show up when people need you.

But sometimes, in the middle of caring for everyone else, it's easy to forget to make time for the two of you.

For a few days, you don't have to be
Pastor and Pastor's Wife.

*You can simply be
husband and wife.*

Come away together for a refreshing marriage retreat designed especially for couples serving in pastoral ministry—a time to rest, laugh, reconnect, have meaningful conversations, and remember why you fell in love in the first place.



SCAN TO SIGN UP

BEFORE THE MINISTRY,
THERE WAS A MARRIAGE.

Come find
US AGAIN.

QUESTIONS?

Contact Ben Crabtree
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REST.

*You both
deserve it.*



RECONNECT.

*Remember what
matters most.*



REFRESH.

*Return home
stronger together.*