

May 31, 2026

Bell's Campground Baptist Church family,

After much prayer, seeking the Lord's wisdom, and many conversations with my family, I have made the decision to retire from serving as your Lead Pastor. My official retirement date will be July 29, 2026.

The discussion of retirement begun 3 years ago with Brent Hodson and then with Tim Petree. I have listened to their counsel and have been encouraged by their prayers. As we entered 2026, I announced to both Brent and Tim in early March that I would announce my retire on May 31, 2026. On April 14, 2026, about 7 weeks ago, I announced and discussed my retirement with the deacons and told them that I would be revealing this retirement to the church on May 31st. For the past 7 weeks I have been continually praying about the exact date of my retirement, and through discussions with Vicki, we decided on July 29 of this year. This is not an easy announcement for me to make because serving this church has been one of the greatest joys and privileges of my life. For the past twelve years, God has allowed me to walk alongside you through seasons of joy, sorrow, growth, and ministry. Together we have worshiped, prayed, celebrated salvations and baptisms, comforted one another in grief, and watched the faithfulness of God over and over again.

My reasons for retirement are three-fold:

1. God has released me of my shepherding of BCBC and is leading me towards other ministries. What they are exactly, I do not know yet, but I do know that I will teach and serve Christ until He takes me home.
2. My health issues have caused distractions in my shepherding on several occasions. My doctor suggested to me to "slow down" several years ago, and I am just now listening to his advice.
3. Family responsibilities. Things are changing quickly in my family, and the recent sickness with my father confirms my decision.

I want to thank you for loving me and my family so well. Thank you for your prayers, your encouragement, your kindness, and your faithfulness to the work of the Gospel. You have been far more than a congregation to me—you have been family. Over the coming weeks, I look forward to continuing to worship, serve, and walk together with you as we prepare for this transition. I ask that you pray for our church leadership, for the future pastor God is preparing, and for my family as we enter this new chapter of life.

I love you deeply, and I thank God for every single one of you. May the Lord continue to bless and strengthen Bell's Campground Baptist Church for His glory.

Now, when I met with the leadership of BCBC in April, that is, the elders, deacons, and Tim Petree, we set in place a team of four to help the transition process for BCBC after my departure. This team is called, the Transition Team, and their purpose is to plan and help the church through this transition period. They have been praying and meeting for the past 7 weeks. The team includes Brent Hodson, Scott Capps, Tim Petree, and Tony Soto. They will be communicating with the church often and will present a plan to the church regarding pastoral transition in the near future. Please be in prayer for them as God gives direction.

In Christ,



Keith Tillman, Lead Pastor
Bell's Campground Baptist Church