

January 15, 2023

Dear NewDay friends & family,

It was just a short while ago that we began the Advent season. Advent is a time of preparation for the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ. The background on this word also means the "arrival or appearance of change." During these past few months, I realized God is bringing me and our congregation into a changing season of life.

For thirteen years I had a clear sense that God was calling me and others into our local YMCA to collaboratively make a difference in the lives of those around us. When the YMCA closed its doors last February, it brought us into a period of prayerful discernment to discover where God was leading us. He opened the doors to meet together at Taco Jed during this time of transition. It has been amazing to see how the Lord has blessed many people through our presence at the YMCA and in this place!

Over this past year I have personally been praying for clarity about God's direction for us. There are three dynamics present in my life at this moment:

- 1) With some of the losses I have experienced over the past few years I want to spend more time with my aging parents.
- 2) I have not been given a clear vision of what God has in store for NewDay. I have prayed for it consistently these past months and sense God calling me to more rest, renewal and reflection.
- 3) During this time, it has become more clear to me that God is redirecting my life to a different season of ministry.

This has led me to conclude that I need to move out of my pastoral position at NewDay in order for myself (and our church body) to prepare for what God has next. Therefore, I am planning to retire from my position as Pastor of NewDay on June 4th, 2023. This will mark over 36 years of pastoral ministry for me.

We will have the help of our Northwest Conference to guide our Leadership Team and staff over the next few months during this transition time as we prepare for passing the baton to the next minister God is calling to lead us. Mary and I love our church family and want to do everything we can in this process for the long term health of NewDay.

We have joined together in the vision we have been given to share the message and love of Jesus with all who need it over these years and have witnessed the change this has brought about in many people's lives. I am so thankful for your influence and example of living for Jesus that has brought us such joy in serving together and look forward to seeing how God directs our next steps in the months to come!

Grateful for you,
Pastor John