

- 1. **You need to set a date for the service.**
- 2. **You also will need to start getting a list of contacts and contacting former church people (and staff) and inviting them back for the restoration.**
- 3. **An official invitation would be appropriate**, with some explanation of what the service is and isn't (i.e. not trying to lure them back to rejoin the congregation).
- 4. **Determine what your corporate response will be to Christ.** You should have the letters people have written who were on the retreat. You will need to articulate for the congregation what He has said to you all, and what you are going to say in confession (taking responsibility for past failures and seeking mercy) and do (any words or actions to former pastors or staff) in response.
- 5. **Determine what each of you will say and do before the congregation, taking responsibility and asking forgiveness** for specific leadership failures that have led to a lack of trust, for failing to protect them, guide them, support them and feed them as shepherds should. Remember, you are standing in the place of all former leaders, shouldering their stuff too. The chairman and or pastor will need to lead this, but you all should have a piece of it. Welcome to spiritual leadership!! This is what Jesus did for us, and now you get to take up your cross and follow Him.
- 6. **Determine what, if any, wider response is necessary or appropriate**—to the community or other churches. Is there anything you need to say or do for them to communicate your failed responsibility to them?
- 7. **Determine if there will be a symbol of your corporate repentance**, something that will be a public reminder of the day and the things you have learned from Christ. Sometimes a Corporate Covenant is an appropriate and meaningful response, both at the leadership level (something you all publicly sign) or something that becomes a part of membership—things we commit to as a church from this point forward.
- 8. **Decide if you want Communion to be a part of the service**—It usually is appropriate, for you have finally "discerned the body rightly" by this service of repentance so to speak.
- 9. **Decide if you want to allow the congregation to respond in some way**—an open mike for their confession as well, something they would sign and bring forward and nail to a cross, etc. etc. There are many possible ways to do this. You need to pray about and choose one right for your church.

This is a lot to determine in not much time, so it will take all your focus and prayer and delegation of responsibility to discern and create the proper spiritual responses that fit your church. Draw others in for input. **We cannot emphasize enough the importance of getting it right, of saying *everything* to Christ and the congregation that needs to be said.**

Print out the above list and start thinking and praying about it. We need to pretty much allow this piece to be all yours. Total ownership needs to be yours, not ours, for this to work. We at Blessing Point are NOT abandoning you, but we will need to walk *beside* you (not leading) silently as you prepare for this. Next to your salvation and taking your wedding vows, there will not be a more serious moment in your lives.

Believe with all your hearts that God will help you. He truly will.

Again, contact me if you have any questions: mark@blessingpoint.org

Warm Grace

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