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Diligent Faithfulness

PINECREST BAPTIST CHURCH

While working with the SBC of Virginia as the regional catalyst for churches in the Hampton Roads area, Reggie Hester began to consult with the leaders of **Pinecrest Baptist Church** in Portsmouth regarding the need and desire for church revitalization. Though his initial role was that of a consultant, God had different plans. After much time and prayer, Hester acknowledged God’s leading and accepted the invitation of the church in 2015 to serve as its next pastor.

“We had kind of been in a place of stagnancy as a church,” said Mark Powell, chairman of the deacons. “We had a lot of workshops and town hall meetings that addressed things that were hindering our growth, getting them out in the open. That really

began the process of transitioning from what I call the old Pinecrest to the new Pinecrest. I knew in my heart that Reggie was the man that God wanted to lead us here at Pinecrest, and being the deacon chairman, I felt it was my duty to support him 100%.”

In addition to identifying necessary growth points and navigating related changes as a skilled shepherd, Hester gave attention to his leadership team. After settling in, Reggie brought on an office administrator and then extended a call to Stephen Day to serve as the youth pastor. Day had grown up under Hester’s student ministry in a previous church.

“Reggie called me and asked about coming over to Pinecrest. I was at

another church as a youth and worship director at the time.”

Reflecting on his leadership, Day said, “Reggie was a very patient pastor. He regularly brought the church and staff together for prayer. He was very transparent, honest, and humble. He confessed early to the church that it was in God alone that they would discover the vision for their way forward in His mission.”

Hester masterfully led Pinecrest for five years as pastor until December 19, 2020, when he passed away suddenly from a heart attack. Amidst their grief, the leaders and members of Pinecrest remained resolute in their resolve to continue in the path of renewal and mission that their pastor had led them to understand and embrace.

“We are not forgetting Reggie,” Day said. “Rather, we are honoring what he instilled in us regarding fulfilling the

mission of the Lord. God is stretching our church, growing us closer to Himself. To see where we are now compared to where we were, I believe we are seeing the beginnings of a revival in our church—I truly believe it. It has been five to six years in the making. We are seeing the ripple effects of Reggie’s faithfulness.”

Following Hester’s example, Day and the worship team have begun to hold and plan quarterly nights of prayer and worship. “We are praying and worshipping to keep the church unified and focused. Prayer can do that!”

“Who’s Your One?” has become the church’s rally cry as they focus their prayers and activity on reaching the lost. Dozens of prayer cards bearing the names of lost loved ones have been tacked to a wooden cross at the front of the sanctuary by the members as a visual reminder of their joint task. They

have even seen a 19-year-old young woman publicly profess her faith in Christ in one of their worship services.

The unexpected loss of their pastor has certainly stretched leaders and members in ways they had not anticipated. The church has called an interim pastor; Day has been named interim associate pastor; and, leaders and members alike are stepping up to stand in the gap to aid the church in its mission. A pastor search team has already begun the work of seeking a new pastor in a manner that is steeped in prayer.

The future of Pinecrest Baptist Church is bright and its legacy long because of the diligent faithfulness of the leaders and members of the church, past and present, in pursuing the mission of God. ■

