

Gateway Church Tithes Plummet, Staff Cuts to Come

While Gateway Church has finally found a new senior pastor, tithes to the church have not rebounded since Robert Morris was ousted last year for the alleged abuse crimes against Cindy Clemishire that started when she was 12-years-old.

According to the Christian Post, the church recently announced that in the next few weeks staff cuts will be made due to this “significant drop” in tithes giving.

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In a statement to church members that was then later shared on social media, Gateway’s elders made the grim announcement of these foreboding events.

“Over the last year, tithing has not mirrored attendance, given the ongoing issues related to the church’s former pastor and that has led to a significant drop in giving are the difficult but practical realities of the season we’ve been in, and we will continue to walk through it with humility, prayer and our commitment to intentionally healing as a church family.”

Given this devastating financial circumstance, the church says, “it has become clear that restructuring our staff is necessary, requiring the tough but necessary step of staff reduction.”

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The Dallas Morning News reported that “there will be a two-week voluntary resignation period for staffers, and packages for employees will be one month of severance and benefits per year of service, up to four months.” These coming layoffs are expected to be completed by the middle of July.

Tra Willbanks, who is the chair of the elders, told The Dallas Morning News that it was “...an extremely difficult decision for us to make, and we didn’t come to it quickly or easily and waited as long as we could.”

He further said that this decision “...was an important step to ensure we are able to minister to our church family well, however it affects real people and members of our church family that we’ve loved and served alongside for years, which is what makes it so painful.” He also stated that they are “trying to love our staff well through this painful process.”

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Last fall, Gateway elder Kenneth Fambro made the shocking announcement that tithing had reduced between 35-40%, and that the church would have to begin looking into laying off employees. The church also faced a lawsuit due to their “moneyback guarantee” tithing principle, which promised that the church would use 15% of its tithes for Jewish ministry partners along with global missions. If church members were not pleased, they were also promised to receive a tithe refund, something that reportedly was not properly upheld.

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