

# Ex-SBC President Stepping Down as Pastor of Bellevue Baptist

Former SBC President and current pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church, Steve Gaines, announced his upcoming departure from his pastoral role. He plans to transition into a ministry focused on traveling and speaking engagements.

"I can't believe it's been 19 years. I was 47 when I it's just gone just so quickly," Gaines says. "And we love you and thank God for you."

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"The Lord Jesus Christ clearly called our family to Bellevue and to Memphis 19 years ago. Bellevue, you've been our family. You prayed for us, cared for us and loved us well. Since 1903 the Lord has had His hand on our church. Can you imagine? 121 years. It's amazing, and we are so grateful for the opportunity to be part of what the Lord is currently doing."

Gaines says that the Lord put it on his heart years ago that a season would come where he would become an itinerate preacher instead of working as a preacher to one set church.

"The Bible says there's an appointed time for everything. And there's a time for every event under heaven. That's Ecclesiastes 3:1," says Gaines. "While I am not retiring from ministry, I will begin a transition out of the pastorate."

Gaines made it clear to the Bellevue congregation that he was not pressured in any way to make this change, but rather that this was simply the time to make a professional leap. This decision comes within less than a year after Gaines was

diagnosed with cancer.

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“While I received a cancer diagnosis 10 months ago, this transition is not connected with that. My treatments are going well. I received a good PET scan report this last week. But regardless of what tests show, my faith is in the Lord and in His Word...” he continues.

Gaines says Bellevue will continue to be he and his wife’s home church, and a team from the church will prayerfully consider who will become the next pastor. Until the new minister for Bellevue is found, Gaines will remain as the pastor and then help train them for several months before fully passing the church over to the new preacher.

“My race as senior pastor of Bellevue is coming to an end, but my commitment to you is to keep running with all my strength and effectively hand off the baton to the next senior pastor. I do not come to this transition with fear. I do not come with regret. I’m genuinely excited to enter into the next phase of our ministry that the Lord has for us. I’m calling it my fourth quarter,” Gaines says.

During this transition, pray for God’s direction and guidance for Bellevue, and for Gaines’ health and new opportunities.

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