

The Shepherds Staff

January 25, 2026

Pastor Kevin's Thoughts About Turning the Church Leadership Over to Pastor Dustin

Dear CCPO Family,

As I briefly noted several weeks ago, the Lord Jesus is leading me to step down from the senior pastor role to pursue a full-time creation/flood ministry. I will be doing so by using multimedia to teach Dr. Walt Brown's biblical and scientific explanation for how the flood of Noah occurred. This change in Church leadership will take place during a special Sunday morning service on April 12, 2026.

In 1990 I became aware of Dr. Brown's Hydroplate Theory and was greatly strengthened in my faith about the veracity of the Bible. Now that the 9th edition of his book is coming out, the Lord is leading me to help others learn this faith-building explanation as well.

I know that we all hate change, but we should be willing to embrace it if we know that the Lord is leading it. The following are the reasons why I really want to encourage you to embrace Pastor Dustin as he takes over the role of leading this family of believers.

In our modern church era, pastors are replaced in various ways. In denominations, pastors last about 3-5 years and then if they were successful (increased membership and revenue) they are offered more established franchises, and another pastor from another church (or fresh out of seminary), who is unknown to the congregation, is brought in to take over.

Non-denominational churches like Calvary Chapel often keep their pastors for many years. Sometimes the pastor is asked to leave by the church, sometimes the pastor leaves the ministry altogether or they move to a different location for various reasons. Some stay until they die. In these cases where the pastor leaves, it forces the church to then go into a pastor search mode to find a replacement, which usually is someone that they do not know.

In our case, I have been the pastor of this church for nearly 33 years (started in October of 1993). Seven years ago, I ruptured a disk in my neck, nearly died, and was paralyzed in both arms. I was unable to pastor or teach on Sundays for 19 weeks. In the early days of trying to recover from surgery, I told the elders at the time that I thought they should replace me since I didn't believe I would be able to return. Instead they prayed for my recovery.

By the grace and mercy of God, I was able to recover, and I doubled down on praying that when the day came, the Lord Jesus would raise up someone to replace me from inside of our fellowship, knowing that this is the ideal way for a senior pastor to be replaced.

Dustin and his family have been attending our church for over 20 years. At the same time I am praying for a faithful replacement for when the need arose, Dustin was being touched by the Holy Spirit to increase his desire to grow in God's word and to serve Jesus in our church family.

While observing this call in Dustin's life, I was praying that the Lord would give Dustin a desire to leave his secular job and join me in serving this church family as an assistant pastor. Juanita and I remember the joy we experienced when Dustin called to ask if I was willing to let him come on staff – a clear answer to prayer.

For the nearly six years since then, Dustin and I have spent hundreds of hours in discussions about the Word of God, walking in the Spirit, discerning the truth, etc. I have witnessed his care for the sheep and seen how God has used Dustin's gifts to cause many to trust in Jesus as their savior and/or to grow in their walk as a biblical Christian. As Paul said about Timothy in Philippians 2:19-21, I have no one (in my 33 years of being a pastor) "who is as like-minded, who will sincerely care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are of Christ Jesus."

Pastor Chuck Smith stayed in the pulpit until cancer sent him to be with Jesus. At the time, thousands were attending Calvary Chapel of Costa Mesa, but none of them were someone Pastor Chuck felt led to turn the church over to. There were also over a thousand Calvary Chapel pastors that Chuck could have asked to replace him, but again, Chuck knew that none of them were "like minded." After he did go to be with Jesus, his son-in-law took over. But this son-in-law was not like minded, or gifted, and as a result he has driven Calvary Costa Mesa into the ground.

All of this to say that I pray all of you who consider Calvary Chapel of Port Orchard as your family will warmly embrace Dustin as your new future senior pastor. It is a gift of God that there is a man and a family that all of you know, who is equipped by the power of the Holy Spirit to faithfully serve Jesus as he serves you as your pastor.

I pray that none of you will be deceived by the fleshly divisions that can try and take over our spiritual thinking at times of change like this. We are not to be loyal to Kevin or Dustin, we are to be loyal to Jesus and His Word. God has gifted Dustin in ways that He has not gifted me, and vice versa. But that must not be used as a reason for us to say, I am of Kevin or I am of Dustin, as Paul warned the carnal church of Corinth against (1 Cor 1 and 3). So let's all keep our eyes on Jesus and keep praying, "not my will but thine will be done."

In the next Shepherds Staff, I will provide more info on how God has made it clear that He wants me to minister in the Creation/Flood of Noah teachings.