

Dear Metropolitan Family,

After much thought and prayer, I believe the Lord is leading me to leave Metropolitan after 20 years of being part of the church staff. If you know me at all, you understand that those are difficult words to utter or type. Serving the Lord at Metropolitan has really been a wonderful gift from God.

About two months ago the Lord told me that it is time for me to retire from ministry here. I resisted the urging at first, but soon came to realize that the Lord was giving me a peace I would not have normally anticipated. It literally seemed He told me that my work is done here. Following through with that, I met with the elder board last month and they very kindly supported my request to have September 30 as my last day.

There are three reasons, I believe, that factor into this change of course in my life. First, my age. Though I don't really want to admit to it, I will soon be eligible for our government to start refunding the money I have paid into the system for so long. In other words, I am Social Security eligible. When I made this announcement on Sunday, I jokingly said that "I want my money back." I really wasn't joking.

The second – and most important reason – is that I literally believe God is directing this move. I am voluntarily leaving my church of 41 years because I believe God is telling me to. I have always found it to be wise to do what He says!

The third important consideration is my family. I am from a small farming town northwest of Enid and many members of my family still live in that area. Since college I have lived away from my true home, Hillsdale, and I have missed out on many important family events and times together. We now have a "new crop" of kids in our family and I really want to play a larger role in their lives and support them at their ballgames, school events, church events, etc. I think that will be a blessing to me. I will be attending my other church home, Hillsdale Bible Church.

The HUGE downside is that I will be leaving behind my church, my church family, and many friends in OKC. That is going to be very difficult. I plan to continue to work at the Oklahoma Christian Counseling Center as a therapist during part of the week, and then I will spend the rest of the week at the farm. This back-and-forth life will allow me the flexibility to stay in touch with friends here, as well as giving me the opportunity to drop in for worship once in a while. But, someday, I will most likely retire in Hillsdale. It's a great place to be.

I want to thank you for all of the encouragement and support you have given me over the years. Thank you to all of you who have volunteered and served so faithfully in various ministries I have been associated with: singles ministries, young adult ministry, single parent initiatives, marriage and parenting conferences, community groups, Stephens Ministry, support groups, teaching, etc. I want you to know that I pray God blesses you to the full for your faithfulness.

Also, I have served with incredible staff members over the years. We became a family and I will miss them very much.

I will never forget the lifelong friends I have made here.

I will be here serving until September 30th. I hope to see you and thank you all in person, but will look forward to the day when I can hug you.

One parting thought: a person's value is not found in their marital status.

With profound gratitude,

Trudy Hoffsommer