



Bellevue

BAPTIST CHURCH

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Dear Prayer Partner,

Last letter I told you that what was supposed to be a simple change of use application with the city turned into a huge problem. The building department required the entire building that we are in to install sprinklers. For the last three months, we have been working through this issue. Every time I felt like I had an update, three days later, I would find out conflicting or new information and our need for the same prayer continued with little change: that God would allow us to continue to use our space or provide us with new space. While we are not done, I feel that I can say it appears that God is answering our prayer to be able to stay in our space. With three years left on a lease that is personally secured, that is a huge answer to prayer!

After many emails, in person meetings, and different proposals, the City has said that they will accept a plan that would keep us from having to install sprinklers. It requires us to make the sanctuary 4 feet smaller and put in pews instead of chairs to reduce the space's occupancy load. Neither of these things make me very happy, but with these changes and some changes to our bathrooms and doors, we should be able to continue to use the space for services. We are resubmitting our plans to the city this week for final approval. While all of this has been happening, we were aggressively looking for alternative space to lease. The biggest challenge is that the spaces that are available all had similar issues to our current location: no sprinklers and they would require a change of use application. Add on top of that the need for more space if we were taking a longer-term lease and the cost was something we would not be able to afford as it would change our rent from \$3,200 per month to north of \$7,000. We even looked at several properties for sale in our general neighborhood. They are rare, but we found two and they average about 1.6 million for about 2,000 square feet of converted house. Even if they would have worked, we just don't have the ability to move forward on something that expensive. We will praise God for this answer to prayer as we make the required updates to our space. We will continue to keep looking at additional space because our lease is up in three years and hopefully we will have outgrown this space even before that time. That is a problem the church and I are looking forward to dealing with.

We recently lost some members with a precious family moving back to Texas. While it always hurts to lose church family, we are so thankful God allowed them to be with us for the last 9 months. Last month I asked you to pray for two that were in discipleship. Unfortunately, both have stopped attending both discipleship and church services. Could I ask that you pray for people to get reconnected with the church?

We have seen some additional guests and families start attending in the last several months and have been averaging 39 people in our main service. Please pray with us that our visitors would get plugged in and grow and that we would be able to minister to them.

It is a privilege to be able to serve the Lord as Pastor of this church. Thank you for your financial giving and for your prayers that make that a reality. Thank you and God bless.

In Christ,

Joel Creekmore