

Dear church leadership team,

Thank you for serving our Lord by serving the people of God, the Church. We trust that you have taken the charge in 1 Peter 5:1-4 to heart:

To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder and a witness of Christ's sufferings who also will share in the glory to be revealed: Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them — not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.

It is good work our Lord has called us to, arising from a call from God and a love for the people of God. But as good as this work is, it takes its toll on us. Because of this, the health of those who minister to the Church require special attention at times. A healthy minister can more easily help the congregation to be healthy. In contrast, an unhealthy minister leads to an unhealthy congregation.

At The Table Retreats, we are committed to healthy ministers who lead healthy ministries. Our retreats are designed to provide the right amount of content and conversation over a long weekend to provide your pastor and your pastor's spouse to be renewed in their marriage and ministry. Unlike other retreats for pastors, we include spouses. Healthy pastors have healthy marriages. And too often spouses are left at home while the pastor gets away on other retreats. At The Table Retreats, we believe there are conversations that need to take place in ministry marriages to keep husbands and wives aligned and energized together.

So, we have several things to ask from you.

1. Give your pastor this long weekend as a gift. Please don't count it against vacation time or expect a sermon on the Sunday of the retreat. This isn't a vacation. Sure, there is rest and beauty and long conversations involved, but ultimately it all is in service of your church community. This is a gift you give freely, knowing it will result in a gift in return.
2. Cover the \$500 cost for the retreat. We know that budgets are tight and that's precisely why we ask you to cover the cost. Please don't pull from your pastor's income or expenses for this. And know that the \$500 cost is only 1/3 of the actual cost of the retreat. The three night's stay, 16 meals per couple, and program costs exceed \$1500 per couple. But our donors believe in the benefit to your pastor, spouse, and congregation so much that they're covering the rest of the cost. And so, we invite you to join them and pay the full cost of the retreat if you're able.
3. Pray. Pray for your own ministry couple and the other couples that will participate in the same retreat. Such prayers are an act of love, as we hold up to our Lord those who uphold us week in and week out.

In the peace of our Lord,

Pete & Charlene Santucci and Geordie & Sharon Ziegler