

# Questions From Our Church Family

Shades Mountain Baptist Church | May 11, 2026

Over the past week, many questions have been submitted by members of our church family regarding Pastor George Wright's resignation and current circumstances at Shades.

Our desire is to communicate as clearly and honestly as we can while also handling sensitive leadership and personnel matters carefully and responsibly. We know this season has created grief, confusion, frustration, and concern for many people we love.

## ***What Happened***

### **1. Why did Pastor George Wright resign?**

Over the course of several years, concerns were raised regarding aspects of George's leadership as Senior Pastor, particularly involving trust, communication, consistency, and the overall health of relationships within the staff and church. Those concerns led to repeated conversations, evaluations, coaching, and ongoing efforts toward improvement over time.

Our Family Pastor, Jeremy Horton's, resignation in April accelerated additional conversations and review surrounding concerns that had already been discussed privately over multiple years. Through those conversations, church leadership concluded that these patterns had become longstanding and were affecting the overall health of the church.

Following those discussions, church leadership recommended that it would be best for both George and the church for him to step away from the role of Senior Pastor. After prayer and consideration of possible paths forward, George chose to resign.

### **2. Did this involve marital infidelity, criminal behavior, or doctrinal issues?**

No. This situation did not involve marital infidelity, criminal behavior, or doctrinal concerns.

### **3. Was Pastor George removed or fired?**

No. Pastor George resigned voluntarily. At the same time, his resignation came after significant conversations with church leadership regarding longstanding concerns and the recommendation that he resign for the future health of the church.

Under our bylaws, neither the Personnel Advisory Committee (PAC) nor the deacons independently have authority to remove the Senior Pastor. A pastoral removal process would require action involving both the deacons and the congregation.

### **4. What were the concerns being referenced?**

The concerns centered around recurring patterns and leadership missteps connected to George's leadership as Senior Pastor, particularly involving trust, communication, consistency, relational strain, and the overall health of relationships within the staff and church.

These concerns were not isolated incidents or a single disagreement. Similar patterns were raised repeatedly over time by different individuals in different settings.



## **5. Was Pastor George given opportunities to address these concerns?**

Yes. Multiple evaluations and development plans, private coaching, and ongoing conversations took place over several years with the hope of improvement.

## **6. Did Pastor George acknowledge these concerns?**

Yes. During conversations with church leadership, George acknowledged that many of the leadership and administrative responsibilities connected to the role of Senior Pastor were not areas where he felt most gifted or effective.

## **7. Were Chad Cossiboom's and Jeremy Horton's resignations coordinated?**

No. Chad Cossiboom's previously announced resignation was connected to a separate sense of calling and future ministry direction that had been communicated privately to George for an extended period of time before becoming public. His resignation was not coordinated with Jeremy Horton's resignation and was not part of an effort to pressure or force George Wright to resign.

Jeremy Horton's resignation and the concerns expressed in his resignation letter did, however, lead to additional review and conversation regarding longstanding concerns related to George's leadership as Senior Pastor.

Out of respect for the people involved and the personal nature of those conversations, the full contents of Jeremy's letter will not be shared publicly.

## **8. Is this related to worship style, city ministry, church demographics, politics, or ministry philosophy?**

No. This situation centered on leadership issues, trust, relational strain, and the overall health of the church environment, not worship preferences, ministry direction, demographics, politics, or doctrinal disagreements.

## ***How Leadership Responded***

### **9. Why was the church not informed earlier?**

Many of the conversations over the past several years involved personnel matters, private leadership conversations, and ongoing efforts toward improvement. Leadership believed those conversations should happen carefully and privately while efforts toward improvement were ongoing.

### **10. Who was involved in this process?**

The primary groups involved were:

- The Personnel Advisory Committee (PAC)
- The active deacons
- The Finance Committee
- Members of the Executive Team

Throughout the process, Pastor George participated in conversations with church leadership.



## **11. What is the Personnel Advisory Committee (PAC)?**

The PAC is a group established within the church's governance structure to help provide oversight, accountability, and leadership support related to personnel matters involving ministerial staff.

The PAC currently includes:

- The Ongoing Church Trustee
- The Chairman of Deacons
- The Chairman of Finance Committee
- The Church Treasurer
- An at-large member appointed according to church structure

## ***What Happens Next***

### **12. Who is currently leading the church?**

Chad Cossiboom is currently serving as Executive Pastor and overseeing church ministries and operations during this season. The deacons and PAC are also actively serving and helping guide the church through this transition process.

### **13. What happens next?**

Our immediate focus is on prayer, unity, healing, and caring well for our church family and staff.

Church leadership is currently evaluating interim pastoral support, outside guidance, and the overall pastor search process. Additional updates will be shared as the deacons begin the process outlined in our bylaws for forming a Pastor Search Committee and beginning the search for the next Senior Pastor of Shades Mountain Baptist Church. We are committed to seeking the Lord, providing stable leadership, and rebuilding trust for the long-term health of our church body.

### **14. Who selects the Pastor Search Committee?**

Under the church bylaws, the deacons are responsible for leading the process of forming a Pastor Search Committee. Additional information regarding that process and timeline will be communicated in the months ahead.

### **15. What has church leadership learned through this experience?**

This season has revealed areas where clearer communication, stronger accountability, healthier leadership rhythms, and better support structures are needed. It has also reminded us of the importance of humility, trust, honest feedback, shared leadership, and caring well for both staff and church members during difficult seasons.

While this has been painful for many people, leadership is committed to learning from it and leading with greater clarity, wisdom, and health moving forward.

### **16. Will the church evaluate its governance structure and processes moving forward?**

Yes. Leadership recognizes that many questions have been raised regarding communication, accountability, leadership processes, and the role of various groups within the church's governance structure. Those conversations are already taking place and will continue in the months ahead.

Any potential recommendations or changes would be approached prayerfully, biblically, and in accordance with the church bylaws and congregation.



### **17. Where can members access the church bylaws?**

The church bylaws are available through the church office and will also be made available digitally during this transition season at [shades.org/updates](https://shades.org/updates).

## **Moving Forward Together**

### **18. How can our church family pray during this season?**

Please pray:

- For unity grounded in truth and grace
- For healing for our church family and staff
- For George, Megan, and the Wright family
- For wisdom for church leadership
- For humility, repentance where needed, and spiritual health across our church
- For the Lord's guidance in the next season of leadership at Shades

