

Dear EFCA West Family –

I can't tell you how humbled and excited I am about the amazing opportunity I've been given to serve as the District Superintendent for EFCA West.

Over the past few years, I've had the opportunity to get to know many of you through my role as the district Director of Church Multiplication. As I move into this new position, I look forward to meeting every one of you personally, in your community and on your turf.

While I'm originally from Southern California, for the past seventeen years our family has lived and ministered in the Phoenix Metro area. I've served as the Lead Pastor of Compass Church in Goodyear, AZ, since 2007. The hardest part about accepting this role was that it meant stepping away from the amazing staff and leaders I've had the chance to work alongside these past dozen years. I was grateful, however, that when I announced to our congregation that I sensed God's strong call to EFCA West, they graciously celebrated with me. In fact, they see it less as me leaving and more as them "sending" me into this next season. How great is that?

God has also blessed me beyond what I deserve with an amazing wife and three fantastic children. Judi and I have been married for twenty-one years. Our son, Ryan (18), just left in September for the University of Chicago, and our daughters, Cambria (16), and Madison (13) live with us in Litchfield Park, AZ.

As I look at this new role, it has not escaped me that I stand on the shoulders of giants who have come before me. I remember as a seminary student at Talbot, back in 1999, taking a class in pastoral ministry from an adjunct professor named Wally Norling. Even though he had long since retired from his role with EFCA West, he spoke with great passion about the tribe he worked so tirelessly to serve. His enthusiasm for the Evangelical Free Church was contagious, and even back then I was able to see the value in what we have together.

Of course, it goes without saying that there will never be another Steve Highfill. I have dubbed him the *real* "most interesting man in the world." Other than going into space, I'm not sure there is anything he hasn't done. But seriously, I've so appreciated his leadership and godly example over the past three years I've had the chance to work for him in my part-time capacity. In fact, even at our last staff meeting, when I was a little short on cash (of course I had a debit card), Steve reminded me that a real man "carries \$200 cash, a pocketknife, and a handkerchief wherever he goes." On that one I was 0 for 3.

So, with a million thoughts in my head about the opportunities and challenges that lie before us, let me just share two. First, over the past six years, I've had the chance to serve as a Chaplain in the US Air Force Reserve. [The Air Force has a creed](#), and in the last stanza it reads, "I will never leave an Airman behind." An accompanying [explanation](#) of this reads, "As Airmen, no matter the situation, we all come home together."

In that same spirit, if I would have one wish, it would be this: **No Pastor Left Behind**. It is no secret that your work is rough. As a shepherd you fight a spiritual war every single day,

often times alone and with multiple layers of resistance. Leadership is a wonderful but wearing business. It is my hope that we, as EFCA West pastors and leaders, no matter the situation, *all come home together*.

The second thought is that I am overwhelmed by the limitless potential each of us has to move the kingdom of God forward wherever he has placed us. Let us never forget who we are: First, we are *Evangelical*, which means we believe in the power of the gospel to actually transform even the most lost and hopeless lives! We also believe that Scripture is God's breath, the lethal sword that separates joints and marrow, and as we preach it boldly and wisely, the trajectories of entire families and communities *can* and *will* change. Let us also never forget that we are *Free*. We rejoice in the liberty that is found in the Spirit of the God as he leads and guides us as shepherds of the Bride of Christ. We move forward with great courage with the blood of Jesus flowing in our veins and the wind of the Spirit blowing at our backs!

You'll be hearing more from me in the coming weeks and months, but I didn't want to go without reminding you to please mark your calendars now for our **District Conference which will be June 18-19 at North Coast in Vista, CA**. Please bring your entire team to this event, which I am confident will be refreshing, encouraging, and inspiring for us all.

Finally, it is my hope to meet every single one of you personally over this next year. In the meantime, please feel free to reach out to me anytime at tim.jacobs@efca.org or by calling/texting (623) 262-5268. May God continue to give us all strength for the journey.

For His Glory,

Tim