

Report for Paul Bauman

One of my areas of focus for this past year was to work with Todd Brooks and Larry Austin to repurpose the pastors' groups. The objective in doing so was to encourage pastors to participate in ministerial communities designed to help them find support, encouragement and help when needed. Pastors need one another as they face the challenges and struggles that come with ministry in the church. Isolation doesn't produce healthy ministry, in fact, it is most often dangerous. The health of our pastors has a profound effect on the overall health of the churches within the EFCA Central. We wanted to provide a place where our pastors can come and experience true Gospel community.

It has been encouraging to see how God is using this repurposing of these groups. The feedback and response is demonstrating a movement away from "best practices" to caring for the heart with the love and support of one another. A recent evaluation of the groups has provided some great feedback and suggestions for how we can continue to help these groups flourish as life-giving groups in the coming year.

As for what is next, the upcoming year looks to be a season of transition for me personally. I have shared with some of you that I am feeling very strongly led back into pastoral ministry within a local church context. I have learned a lot about myself, and the areas God wants to continue to grow me this past year. While it has been a challenging and humbling season it has also been deeply beneficial.

I will continue to help Mike Shields as I work alongside a couple churches walking through challenging circumstances. I am thankful to be available to help them out at this time. My wife Suzie and I are trusting God for what is next. We are praying for an opportunity within the metro area but are ultimately submitted to His will.