

June 10, 2020

To: Steve Morgan

From: Andrew Lumpe

We regularly speak about the desire to handle things relationally and be clear about how things impact us. To that goal, I have some hard and uncomfortable things to share but believe it is necessary for moving forward. My hope is to be forthright and honest about a series of related issues. Please know that I am willing to speak personally about any of the matters outlined below should you request.

Starting around 2006, you were struggling emotionally. I expressed concern on multiple occasions and spoke with you and others about how to help. Many of those close to you, along with the overseers, were concerned about your well-being and functioning. It got to the point where church members were asking me about you. I had numerous conversations with leaders in Seattle and Carbondale about how to help you through this difficult time and I suggested on more than one occasion that professional help might be needed in terms of counseling and/or medical assistance. As an overseer and board member of Bluesky Church, I was getting ready to ask you to take a leave of absence and seek professional help.

At about this time, in June 2007, a network conference was hosted at Bluesky Church in Seattle. You were having an increasingly difficult time during this conference displaying outwards signs of distress and anguish during teaching and interactions with people. Members of the church noticed and expressed concern to me. I continued to be troubled and expressed this to James Chidester asking what could be done to help. During one of the conference sessions, I was pulled aside by Larry Anderson and James for a private conversation. They told me that you asked them to share some background information with me as an explanation for your situation.

Larry and James told me that you were distressed and broken over a crime that you committed in the 1980s. They told me you were arrested for sexually assaulting a male high school student in a local church youth group while you were serving in a leadership capacity for the youth group, the victim was 17 years old at the time, and sexual physical contact occurred. They told me that the case was adjudicated by the court but it was not clear what restitution to the victim was made, what penalties were meted out, how the case was ultimately resolved legally, or if you received any professional services related to the abuse.

During this meeting with Larry and James, they told me to keep the information secret and to not to tell anyone including Torrey. They told me that the issue was a closed matter. Larry was adamant that I needed to trust you as my pastor because he did. Larry was very intimidating with his voice and body language.

A few weeks later I was briefly told by you that Larry conducted a background check to determine if a criminal record was publicly available as there was concern that the information could become public. No record of the crime was found through Larry's search and you expressed relief. That brief conversation was the only time you and I ever discussed the matter. I'm sure it was awkward for you as it was for me and the topic was never discussed again. You continued in various levels of distress for sometime until it slowly dissipated and we all turned attention to other matters. My responsibility as a board member ended in 2011.

At the time of being told this information and continuing for many years to present, I had numerous questions, confusion, and much distress as to its potential implications in terms of victim impact, pastor qualifications, impact on the church, and your personal wellbeing. Being an overseer at the time also gave me a level of responsibility for the church. I held these questions to myself as it was communicated to me to remain silent and that the issue was a closed matter. Being told to keep the information secret caused me to hold things inside and I was fearful about any repercussions. My friendship with you, James, and Larry likely also clouded my judgement. I spoke to no one about the issue.

I was very concerned, confused, and not sure where to turn. It felt as though I was told just enough information and warned to keep silent in order to keep from raising questions. These statements shut down my capacity to process and consider the information that had many implications. I held onto this burden by myself for 12 years.

I realize that you were likely embarrassed or worried about my reaction. And that may be why you sent Larry and James to talk to me instead of speaking with me directly. But that action was hurtful, showed a lack of trust and openness with me, and made me feel as though I was only eventually told because I was raising concerns. I forgive you for that action.

I was asked to serve as an overseer for the church without prior knowledge of your background while others knew. The information was withheld from me until such time that you and others felt was necessitated. The lack of full disclosure handicapped my ability to effectively function in the capacity as an overseer. This was wrong and also displayed a lack of trust. I forgive you for that as well.

In the summer of 2019, I reached out to Larry and James via email and letter, shared how hard and hurtful that conversation 12 years ago was, and described how it negatively impacted me. I shared that the intimidating communication, statement of closure, and secrecy caused long term hurt, fear, anxiety and kept me from processing the information for myself. I let them know that I forgive them and I pledged not to retaliate in any way. I expressed a desire to reconcile and left it to them to contact me if they wished to speak further. James contacted me quickly and apologized. I never heard from Larry.

The recent emphasis on sexual abuse in the general public sphere, and now also within the church, caused me to reconsider this issue over the past year. I was concerned that information about your previous crime could become public through the victim which often occurs as victims are emboldened or work through the impact of abuse after many years. I was also concerned that you may continue to deal with unresolved issues impacting your well being and functioning. I also felt a level of responsibility for the church as a former overseer. All of this weighed heavily upon me.

Not knowing where to turn due to being told to remain silent on the issue, I began to see a Christian counselor and also seek some external advice. All were in agreement that at minimum, that church leaders who are in decision making responsibility within the network needed to be aware of your background and that I should not directly approach you. At maximum, some called for a more indepth inquiry. After much prayer, consultation, discussion with Torrey, and working up courage, I eventually approached Luke as my local church pastor who is also a member of the Network Leadership Team. This contact occurred in late May 2019. He reached out to Sandor whom I eventually learned had prior knowledge about your background. Sandor and I had several phone conversations and he flew out to SLO in early June 2019 to meet with Torrey and me. I told Sandor from the beginning that the situation was in the hands of the Network Leadership Team as I was not in any formal decision making capacity. During this process, Sandor brought James into the conversation. James and I eventually talked via phone several times. Sandor and Luke agreed that it was critical to reach out to Larry and James and let them know how the initial conversation in 2007 impacted me and Sandor even offered to help facilitate that process. I told them that I would reach out to them on my own which I did as mentioned earlier in this letter. Luke and Sandor both indicated to me that I handled things rightly and with integrity throughout the process.

During the in person conversation in SLO with Sandor and Luke in June 2019, Sandor asked what we were going to do next. He stated that if we had difficulty following you as our Network leader, it would be difficult to follow Luke as our local pastor. We stayed

around Vista for some time as we processed what was next. We eventually pulled back from group leading and Torrey turned over bookkeeping to Kie. We recently made the decision that we should move on from Vista and the church network. We spoke with Luke in early March 2020 about our decision to leave just as the pandemic shut things down. He was kind throughout the entire process and expressed deep sorrow about everything we experienced. I believe that he told Vista staff members about our decision to leave. Others at Vista and around the network are starting to find out that we left. Given our long relationship and history, we wanted to tell you directly in our own words about how things impacted us, what transpired, and about our decision to leave Vista and the network before you heard through back channels.

We're in the process of figuring out what's next for us but trust that God will give us clear direction as he always has done. As mentioned earlier in this letter, the offer to speak remains should you desire to do so.

Andrew Lumpe