

Carlos Gutierrez  
Anaheim, CA

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To whom it may concern,

I have had the pleasure of getting to know and closely interact Dave Young when he arrived at my home church, Wintersburg Presbyterian during a challenging time, as we sought to heal from recent events that led to friction, hurt, and a lack of leadership. He came on as an intentional interim pastor through Vital Church Ministries. He was with us for close to a year and half.

Dave provided the structure and practical pathway for our elders, the congregation and staff to begin to address core issues that were preventing us from healing and pointed us toward seeking a God-led process of building trust and modeling forgiveness. And he did it with grace, speaking the truth in love, and challenging us to confront unhealthy habits and behaviors.

As an elder, I witnessed Dave take our Session and lead us through a study on biblical eldership to develop our group and equip us to lead others and to grieve for the broken-ness that had occurred. It was a healthy, needed and something that we alone on our own could not have done. He saw what was needed, discerned the right approach, and was decisive in his actions. We were grateful to receive and operate under his leadership and care.

Dave also played a key administrative and executive role at our church, identifying needed governance reforms, making effective changes and bringing people along to build shared agreement. He balanced sharing hard truths that were needed to be heard with patience. He led our monthly elder gatherings and other interim meetings with both a sensitivity for what we were navigating and also a depth of experience. He coached and introduced us to rhythms of prayer, reflection, and devotionals to anchor our decisions and trust in Jesus, who ultimately would be the one who would restore hope and unity for our church and mend broken relationships.

Dave had a clear vision to get our church ready for a more permanent Sr. Pastor leader and to discern where God was leading us. He was intentional about setting the pieces in place for that to happen. He was hands-on in preparing hearts, adjusting organizational structures, practices, and systems. This was evidenced by actions and programs that Dave initiated and led with the support of staff: we went through church-wide book studies on engaging conflict redemptively, emotionally healthy spirituality, and series of live church-wide meetings & working sessions of 70-90 individuals that devoted their weekends to discerning where God was leading our church. He was incredibly productive and indefatigable...and by his example, others were also led to be equally engaged in supporting the vision he had for us.

I am proud to call Dave a friend and would enthusiastically recommend him for any ministry or pastoral engagement looking for strong leadership, a man of integrity, creativity, and a depth of experience and humility.

Sincerely,



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