



July 16, 2014

To Whom It May Concern:

Craig Beaman and I began seminary studies together at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in the fall of 1985, and we have maintained a friendship throughout the years. During our time in seminary, Craig and I served together as volunteers in the youth ministry at Riverside Baptist Church in Fort Worth, as well as joining other students in a regular prayer group.

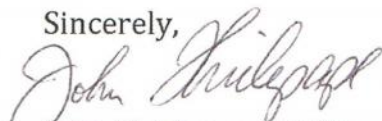
In 2007, Craig began serving the Bethel Baptist Church in Weatherford as their Pastor. Bethel had experienced several years of serious decline in a location that did not afford much opportunity for recovery. Craig served the church faithfully for six years and rebuilt fellowship among the members. Ultimately, the church could not keep pace with the deaths of longtime members and an inability to attract new members to their location. After several months of prayerfully considering their options, the church voted to close its doors in late 2013 and donate the property to the Parker Baptist Association. Today, that location is serving as a Center for ministry to the Weatherford community and a facility for leadership development training in our Association.

I observed during that time that the congregation was united in spirit, they loved one another deeply, and they loved Craig and his wife, Amy. Craig's greatest strengths lie in the areas of personal relationships and personal discipleship. The members of Bethel had grown in their love for the Lord and one another, in spite of being unable to keep a consistent pace of numerical growth.

Craig is committed to biblical preaching. He knows the Scripture well and consistently applies it to his own life as well as to the lives of others. He has a strong prayer life, and has led the Weatherford Ministerial Alliance for several years as the organizer of the annual gathering for the National Day of Prayer. He has also served the Parker Baptist Association as our vice-Moderator and currently as our Moderator, providing advice and assistance through several transitional issues that we have faced. Craig is a strong supporter of missions and cooperative ministry among churches.

I strongly believe that Craig has much to offer in ministry, and I would strongly encourage his consideration by any church to serve as a Senior Pastor, or as an Associate Pastor where his gifts for discipleship and spiritual growth can be utilized. He will leave any church that he serves spiritually stronger and more deeply committed to following Jesus Christ.

Sincerely,

  
John Thielepape, D.Min.  
Director of Missions