

# Called to Lead, Tempted to Quit: Why Pastors Need Refreshment

by [Bob Russell](#)

If you're a preacher feeling weary, discouraged, or just plain worn out—you're not alone. Ministry is a wonderful calling, but it can also be one of the most emotionally and spiritually exhausting jobs in the world. Recent surveys reveal the shocking statistic that seven out of ten pastors drop out within the first ten years. Forty-three percent of those who remain seriously consider quitting.

That's why, since retiring from the local pastorate in 2006, I've led over 100 retreats for ministers—each one designed to provide what we call “A Time of Refreshing.” The Bible instructs us to “[*encourage*] one another and all the more as you see the Day approaching” ([Hebrews 10:25](#)). The BRM retreats offer encouragement and renewal for pastors who have been fighting on the front lines of ministry. We remind them of their high calling and the deeper strength found in Christ. The Bible says, “Put on the full armor of God” for a reason—we're in a spiritual war. And we need faithful leaders willing to “fight the good fight” and finish the race.

I'm grateful to serve alongside **Tom Ellsworth**, my co-leader and longtime friend. Tom is a retired pastor from Bloomington, Indiana—fifteen years my junior—and as my successor, he now serves as the official Director of BRM. He has a huge heart for younger pastors and brings a wealth of wisdom, counsel, and insight. Though our leadership titles have shifted, our format and vision for the retreats remain unchanged.

We recently received a copy of an email from one of the attendees that he sent to another pastor to encourage him to attend. It offers a great perspective on what makes our retreat a unique and inspirational experience:



*“Hey Brother, I was blessed to attend one of Bob Russell’s Mentoring Retreats in the spring of 2017 and I will never forget it. I can’t encourage you enough to sign up for it. There are several reasons...*

- 1. It’s totally free of charge! Frankly, that alone got this tightwad’s attention. 😊 The retreat is an all-expense-paid experience which includes beautiful accommodations, great food, and fun outings with the other pastors. (There is a \$500 deposit required to reserve your spot, but it is totally refunded to you at the end of the retreat. This discourages no-shows and early departures.)*
- 2. It’s convenient. You won’t spend hours driving or flying there because the retreats are held in a beautiful 5-star lodge at SECC’s camp in southern Indiana across from Louisville.*
- 3. It’s an experience you will always remember and treasure. Literally from the moment you pull up to the curb, you will be honored, pampered, and appreciated for who you are and what you do as a minister serving God and His church.*



4. *It's an opportunity to know and love other pastors like yourself. I love the fact that Bob makes sure it's a fairly small group (8-9) of guys who are invited to each retreat. That way, each attendee becomes well-acquainted with the others. Not only that, each person ministers at a church of similar size so, in your case, you will be with men who also serve in a small church.*

5. *It's a wealth of practical ministry insights. You will not only hear from the heart and mind of Bob Russell but you will also hear other experienced pastors (like Tom Ellsworth) share from their years of serving in the pulpit. And, because it is a small group, you will have opportunities to interact, ask questions, and literally sit at the table with Bob and others who will bless you with a wealth of leadership experiences.*

6. *It's going to be fun! I don't want to give away the surprises you will experience in the afternoons. Just know you will always fondly remember them.*

7. *It's both inspiring and rejuvenating. Frankly, it seems those in the paid ministry are rarely honored and given opportunities to "have our cups filled." There is a reason why this retreat is called, "A Time of Refreshing." Bob understands that and has created a memorable experience for you and so many others to enjoy. I hope you will sign up for the next available retreat offered for ministers of small churches. I believe you're going to thank our Lord later for doing so. This retreat is so good that there is usually a waiting list, so please go to the link below asap."*

If you're a preaching pastor who hasn't yet attended, I encourage you to visit the Retreats tab on [BobRussell.org](http://BobRussell.org) and apply today. We'd love to have you join us. And if you're not a pastor but know someone who could benefit, please pass the word along.

*"Let us not grow weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up." (Galatians 6:9)*

[Register for a BRM Mentoring Retreat](#)