

## **Belvedere Family Church: An Acknowledgement, Apology and Announcement**

Justin Okamoto  
December 8, 2023



### **An Acknowledgement, Apology and Announcement**

Dear Belvedere Community,

I want to express my gratitude to each one of you for being a part of our wonderful community. I strongly feel that we are all being guided by our Heavenly Parent.

I also want to take a moment to publicly acknowledge some mistakes, apologize, and make an announcement.

Over the past two months, as we've collectively navigated changes in our community structure, I've taken time for reflection and I recognize that there have been missteps, particularly in how I handled the dissolution of the council. The way this was announced could have been better, and I should have communicated with you about my intentions/decision beforehand, especially those who played a role in creating the council system here in Belvedere. I understand that some of you felt hurt, blindsided, and undervalued for your contributions, and for this, I sincerely apologize.

In this period of reflection, I've had profound conversations with many of you, witnessing first-hand the deep love and commitment of our community members. Some have revealed parts of their lives that were previously unknown to me, while others have expressed extraordinary forgiveness, pain, strength, resilience, love, and gratitude. Through these interactions, I've come to a realization - the understanding that God resides in each one of us, and that we are love, just as God is love.

In discussing the new community structure we are developing, I realize I need to consult and involve more of you in decision-making moving forward.

Rather than dwelling on the past, I am eager to take these lessons learned from these mistakes and move forward in building Belvedere into a community anchored in love.

To that end, I want to visit you. I want to meet with each of you, in your homes, in a coffee shop, wherever. Let's meet; let's talk face to face. Let's appreciate one another, share our hearts, and let's build a community centered on God, one loving act at a time. Pastor Daryl will be reaching out to you sometime to schedule a visit. If you don't hear from him, feel free to reach out to him first!

In addition to this I know many of you have been waiting patiently to hear the new structure for the community. After hours of conversations and meeting together we are ready to share with everyone. Dec. 17th we will have a time to share the plan and also have some time for give and take after our community gathering on that day. Hope you can make it!

Your pastor and brother,

Justin