

Pastoral Search Committee Update

Aug. 4, 2016

Your Pastoral Search Committee has been hard at work during the months of June and July. With your help and input during two Guided Conversation Sundays, we've truly begun the collective work towards finding our new pastor. Thank you to all who participated and have shared your thoughts and opinions! Evidence of this work is on display in the Gathering Room. Please stop by and take a look.

On June 26 our conversations centered on three questions:

1. What responsibilities or essential functions do you expect your new pastor to fulfill related to worship?
2. What responsibilities or essential functions do you expect your new pastor to fulfill related to faith formation?
3. Pastors share an affinity with the creativity of painters, musicians, sculptors, and poets. What kind of creative qualities do you expect from your new pastor regarding your worship and faith formation?

Participants were asked to brainstorm ideas and thoughts and then prioritize them. A summary of the top responses indicates we are searching for a pastor who:

- Preaches a sermon that is biblically based, but relevant to our daily lives, and challenges us to do God's work.
- Seeks to appeal to and include all generations in faith formation activities.
- Motivates us as church members to take a leading role in worship and faith formation activities using our unique talents.
- Is flexible and dynamic.
- Has a strong appreciation for music.

Three different questions were asked and discussed on July 24:

1. Healthy congregations expect faithful pastors to respect their bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit. What are your expectations of our future pastor in regards to his/her self-care?
2. Healthy congregations expect faithful pastors to be learning and growing constantly. In what ways do you expect our future pastor to seek inspiration and education?
3. Healthy congregations expect faithful pastors to share a balance of being a servant and being a leader. What will our congregation and pastor need to do together in order for the pastor to have the right balance between servant and leader?

The same format was followed to brainstorm ideas and then prioritize. Top priority responses are summarized as:

- Makes time to sit alone to listen for God's message.
- Makes time for study through classes, seminars, and retreats.
- Seeks social and emotional support outside of the congregation through family, friends, and counseling.
- Is active in the UCC Conference.
- Meets regularly with mentors and colleagues.
- Has excellent delegation and communication skills.
- Is a good listener.

A third Guided Conversation Sunday is scheduled for Aug. 21, but our focus will shift. Because the congregation and pastor will be in a covenantal relationship and will experience and practice a mutual ministry, the pastor will have some expectations of us too. What can the new pastor expect from his/her congregation at FHCUCC? Look in the Aug. 11 and Aug. 18 issues of the TAB for the specific questions to prepare for another in-depth conversation.

The Pastoral Search Committee has also been working on completing an extensive church profile. The UCC Conference has given us a 38-question document that asks for statistical information on our members, our finances, our cities and communities, etc. There are also sections on Congregational Life and Wider Church Connections. The goal of the profile is to give candidates as complete and accurate a picture and description as possible of Falcon Heights Church. This fall the committee will be reaching out to you in the form of a survey that will help put our picture in sharp focus.

Your committee is energized and excited about our work as a committee and our work with you as a congregation. At the start of each meeting we pray together, say the vision statement and covenant in unison, and discuss a Bible passage to help ground us. At our most recent meeting we focused on Acts 1: 4-5, "The Gift of the Holy Spirit." Our take-away that evening was that the Holy Spirit speaks through everybody and anybody. That's one reason we look to all of you for help with the journey to call our next pastor.