

Dear Members of Historic Franklin Presbyterian Church,

On December 31st Sally and Will said farewell to our church. In the months that followed questions started to emerge re “what’s going on”? The two main questions appear to be:

1. When will we get our new pastor?
2. Why is it taking so long?

The path to finding a new pastor that will be an *excellent* fit with our church is not an easy one, and is not a task to be taken lightly. In fact, it is estimated that the entire process from the day Sally and Will left to the day when we install a new pastor will be about two years. While that may seem like a long time to us now, it's helpful to know that this is the typical length of time for this process in the Presbyterian Church (USA).

Our transitional pastor, Mark McDaniel, started here in early May. After taking a few months to get to know the congregation, he formed a Transition Team in late August to start working on the task of finding a new pastor. The team consists of Christi Enschede, John and Mona Lee, Hal Moore, Robert Smith, Debra Vanderveer, Tanner Welch and Tonya Young.

To find a new pastor that is both an excellent fit with the congregation and one who is capable of leading us forward, we, as a congregation, have some work to do.

In broad terms, we need to answer three basic but challenging questions. These are as follows:

1. Today, who are we as a church congregation?
2. Where are we today in our spiritual journey both individually and collectively?
3. Where is God calling us to go in the future --
 - a. How will we get there?
 - b. What will it look like when we get there?

These may sound like simple questions but they have far-reaching implications for how we define and present our church to prospective pastoral candidates. Additionally, getting answers to these questions will help us define what we are looking for in a new pastor. Think of it like preparing a job description -- but with a lot more detail.

Accordingly, the Transition Team and Pastor Mark will be kicking off a number of activities to address these questions.

The first step will be a Bible study called “Engage” which Pastor Mark will lead. The purpose of the Engage study is intended to revive our call to serve as Christ’s disciples, strengthen our abilities to witness to him, enhance the ways we call others to discipleship, and simply to enjoy life together in the body of Christ.

It will kick off on **Sunday October 29**, and run for six consecutive Sundays. It will be held in Fellowship Hall at **9:45AM**. Each session will last for 45 minutes. Adult Sunday School classes normally held at this time will be suspended for six weeks. For those who can’t make this time, a second class of the Engage study will be held starting **Wednesday November 1 at 7PM** in Fellowship Hall.

Additional steps to follow will include written surveys and a few congregational gatherings.

Regular updates will be given at selected church services to keep everyone informed as to “what’s going on”. Additionally, updates will be sent via email, and posted on the church website as well as bulletin boards around the church.

When all of the steps are completed, the Transition Team and Pastor Mark will summarize the results and turn them over to our Session for final questions and approval. Then a summary will be shared with the congregation. At that point, we will seek permission from the Committee on Ministry (COM) of the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee to form a PNC (Pastoral Nominating Committee). The PNC will be composed of members of this church elected by the congregation. It will be charged with writing the MIF (Ministry Information Form). This is the formal document required to call a new pastor. After the MIF is approved by the COM, the PNC can begin the process of selecting and interviewing prospective candidates, making a final decision and making a recommendation to the congregation.

The Transition Team asks for your patience, prayer and your involvement. Together, we are discerning God’s will for the future of our church, and there can be no more important task.

Historic Franklin Presbyterian Church Transition Team