

Hope Church

Leadership Transition FAQ

June 4, 2023

Why did the Consistory appoint a Leadership Transition Team?

In 2018, Pastor Bill proposed that the Consistory create a team to consider the future of Hope Church. In 2019, The 2020 Vision of Hope Team offered recommendations, including one for Leadership Transition, which the Congregation approved. The Leadership Transition Team (LTT) is the result of that Recommendation.

What is the purpose of the Leadership Transition Team?

The work of the LTT is to form a harmonious pastoral leadership team at Hope Church by recommending pastors who complement each other in unique roles, and to plan for a new lead pastor's call.

Why is Pastor Bill departing as our Senior Pastor?

Pastor Bill had been planning his retirement several years ago, but due to various circumstances, that did not happen. Pastor Bill will turn 70 on June 30, 2024, at which time his Call as our Installed and Ordained Minister of Word and Sacrament terminates by the rules of order of the Reformed Church in America. We pray his successor will be in place by then.

What will happen to Pastor Tom when we get a new Lead Pastor?

The candidates will be informed that the Consistory intends to retain Pastor Tom as our Care Pastor at least through 2024, and perhaps beyond. In late 2024, the Classis of Wisconsin will be asked to renew Pastor Tom's credentials as a Preaching Elder. If appropriate to our needs, the Consistory may then extend Pastor Tom's contract as our Care Pastor beyond 2024.

How were the leaders and members of the LTT selected?

Earlier this year, the Consistory appointed Betsy and John Warmus as co-leaders, Jenny Justus as clerk, and our three Pastors (Bill, Tom, Donna) as non-voting members. This team, working with the Consistory, through prayer and conversation, worked through a list of nominees to form the slate of five at-large members: Fred Huerta, Seth Kramer, Deb McDougall, Karel Voss, Jesika Weigel. The 11-person LTT offers a balanced yet efficient representation of the Congregation.

What traits are important in the next lead pastor?

There is no pre-determined candidate, nor is there a pre-determined set of traits for which we are searching. We will be asking you, the Congregation, this very question in town hall sessions, private discussions, and perhaps in a congregational survey. Your opinion matters to the LTT! The LTT will, of course, determine minimum qualifications for the men and women who will be applying for the position.

What role will Consistory have in the selection of the next Lead Pastor?

The LTT will present the Consistory one finalist, for an up or down vote. If approved, that candidate will be presented to the Congregation. If not approved, the LTT will return to its work and present another candidate.

What role will the Congregation have in the selection of the next Lead Pastor?

The Congregation will be asked to provide an advisory vote on the finalist presented by the LTT and approved by the Consistory. There is no set margin of approval which is required, but any candidate would be unlikely to accept a call for which the Congregation did not offer a sizable majority in the advisory vote.

How will the Congregation be advised of progress of the transition?

The LTT will provide at least monthly updates in the newsletter and bulletin. Likewise, Pastor Bill, as Administrator for the LTT, will always be happy to answer any appropriate questions.

What is the schedule for the transition plan?

The LTT is doing the important work of reading, studying, and praying to prepare for this task. The first meeting is on June 26, 2023. The prayer and plan are that a church profile will be finalized this fall, advertised this winter, with candidate interviews next spring. We hope to have a candidate ready for approval late next spring, with a start date of about June 30, 2024.

Will Pastor Bill & Jill be leaving Hope Church when his successor is hired?

This will be determined in discussions amongst all parties near the end of the process and the conclusion will be based on the consensus opinion as to what will help the next lead pastor achieve greatest success in beginning her or his pastorate at Hope Church.