

Transition Plan

Pastor Kevin announced his intention to retire in the summer of 2026. This was not a surprise to the Governance Board.

In the spring of 2024, the Governance Board established a Transition committee in response to Pastor Kevin's notice of intention to retire in 2026. This two-year window of time is a significant blessing, as it allows ESCOG to make a smooth, thorough, and strategic transition to the next lead pastor. A change of Lead Pastor is one of the most important decisions a church will make which can change the trajectory of the church for a decade or more.

Since that time, the Transition Committee has been busy at work with several consultations and discernment processes being followed. These have included:

- Identifying the characteristics and criteria of the next lead pastor.
- Engaging with the leadership of the Canadian Church of God Ministries regional team, specifically George Lutzer and Tim Clarke.
- Discussions with other churches who have recently completed similar transitions, including consultations with Pastor Nathan Weselake of Prairie Alliance Church, a multi-site church across Manitoba and Northwest Ontario.
- Deciding on the appropriate process – choosing a competent internal candidate, “head-hunting” the wider church, advertising and receiving resumes. The Board believed we had a very capable person on staff in Pastor Drew and decided the 1st step was to discern “Is Pastor Drew the one?”.

- The Board undertook a month-long Discernment process that called on the board members to fast, pray, and listen for God's voice. After a month the Board gathered one afternoon to share what they heard God telling them. All the Board members and Pastor Kevin agreed that Pastor Drew was the one to ask and pursue. The Board believed Drew has many strengths and leadership qualities and shares the same vision and values of ESCOG. Drew's familiarity with and contributions to the current growth of ESCOG is a significant strength.
- Pastor Drew and Allison were then asked to undertake a similar month-long discernment process to see if God was similarly calling them. In January 2025 the Board met with Pastor Drew and Allison to hear them share their affirmation of that calling.
- The Transition Team has since been planning a smooth and well thought out transition process.
- ESCOG Bylaws must govern this process. The next step is a congregational vote. We will ask for an affirmation vote of 75% for this transition to move forward. Should this 75% vote not be achieved, we will be required to start this process over without the benefits afforded by affirming Drew into the role.
- Once we have a completed affirmation, the formal transition process will begin with Pastor Drew assuming a growing role in the leading of the staff, Board, and congregation. It is expected by June 30th next year that the baton-handing will result in a natural, smooth transition.

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