

Pastoral Search Team Report

January 2018

We hope you and your family have had a good start to this new year.

We are at the stage in the pastoral search where it is difficult to communicate much directly and still maintain the confidentiality of the process. We continue to meet weekly, and make progress. It is like a caterpillar in a chrysalis – lots of things are happening, but not apparent from the outside! For this letter, we'd like to share two things that we are learning, and each with a way that the CSPC congregation can participate.

Two important lessons for us in this season are:

1. Prayer is one of the most important things that we can be doing in seeking a new pastor.

The lesson: It may seem trite, but it is absolutely true. We cannot succeed without God's work. We are utterly dependent on Him. And He asks us to continue to call out to Him (Luke 18:1-8). Many members of CSPC have let us know that they are praying regularly, and we are so grateful for this. It has given us strength through some of the ups and downs that we have already experienced.

How you can participate: John Wood suggested to us recently that there are really two parts to the Pastoral Search Team – one part that goes to meetings (the 14 of us) and one part that does the work of prayer. Many of you have already been working on this second team. If you have felt the particular call to pray regularly for the pastoral search, and would like to get to know others who have this same call, and perhaps start meeting together to pray, please e-mail us at pastoralsearch@cspc.net with your e-mail address or other contact information. The Pastoral Search Team does not plan to do anything to organize this, other than provide the list to others who are interested.

2. God is doing something in us through the process of seeking a new pastor

The lesson: We have heard from search committees from other churches, and have already experienced to some extent, that God's purpose for us in seeking a new senior pastor is not just to provide that person, but to do other work in us as well. We believe that this is true, not just for the search team, but for the entire congregation.

How you can participate: Pray the Psalms with us (see schedule below). And pray them in light of the work that God is doing. It is very possible that God is teaching us patience and a complete trust in Him in a time of uncertainty. For example, as we pray Psalm 130 – “My soul waits for the Lord, and in His word I hope,” we can ask that God would use this season that we are waiting to learn to hope in His word. As we pray Psalm 121 – “I lift up my eyes to the hills, from where does my help come. My help comes from the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth,” we can ask that we would see our help coming only from him, not from any man, however spirit-led and gifted.

Continued prayer requests

For the Pastoral Search Team

- Pray that we will have the mind of Christ and be unified (Psalm 133)
- Pray for wisdom to choose the right person
- Pray for discipline in our team and our church leadership

For the next pastor

- Pray that God will increase his passion for preaching the Word of God
- Pray that God will give him a love for CSPC and strength to leave his current position
- Pray that he would begin relationships at CSPC in the right way
- Pray that God would prepare our future pastor to shepherd the flock effectively
- Pray for the next pastor's family, especially his spouse, that she would also be convinced of the Lord's leading for this move, and that she would quickly be integrated into the community here.

For members of CSPC

- Pray for patience
- Pray that all would place a high priority on biblical preaching
- Pray that we are objective and eager to learn and hear the Word
- Pray that God would give us a deeper love for and dependence upon him as we move through a season of transition

Praying the Psalms

We continue to pray the Psalms together daily. Please join us as we continue to pray the Psalms of Ascent:

Sunday - Psalm 121 - Our help comes from you, O God
Monday - Psalm 123 - We look to you, O God
Tuesday - Psalm 125 - We trust in you, O God
Wednesday - Psalm 127 - You build this house, O God
Thursday - Psalm 130 - We wait for you, O God
Friday - Psalm 131 - Our hope is in you, O God
Saturday - Psalm 133 - We are one in you, O God