

Christ Presbyterian Church Informational 'Session on Session' Meeting February 28, 2021

Subject: Associate Pastor Calling Process

Questions and Answers / Discussion Items:

1. Do we have a basic timeline?

Answer: Session has laid out an approximate timeline. It is possible that if all the steps go smoothly, we could be calling an Associate Pastor by the fall. It is also possible that it will take longer than that, depending on the candidates and possible time needed for negotiations with a candidate. Earliest case scenario would be the fall, but it could potentially take longer and it is not unheard of this type of process to take up to two years.

2. Additional notes about the qualifications for the position: we will be looking for someone who is already ordained in the EPC or immediately ordainable. We will be looking for someone who has some experience, we are not considering this an entry-level position. By already ordained or ordainable in the EPC, that means a seminary graduate who has already completed the steps toward ordination in the EPC, which is a minimum two-year process.

3. Do we have any indication of the salary range that this would require?

Answer: the median range for an Associate Pastor for our area is in the ballpark of \$42K-\$52K per year (median) – we will try to come in on the higher end of that. Details still have to be worked out. This information, including down to the penny details will be finalized when our Church Information Form (CIF) is finalized. It will include things like book allowance, phone allowance, base salary, housing allowance and others.

4. Is ordination something like the process Phil had to go through to become a pastor in the EPC?

Answer: Phil was considered immediately ordainable because the EPC will take pastors from the PCUSA who are willing to affirm the theological, biblical convictions of the EPC. We could be looking at someone who is already ordained in the EPC, we could be looking at someone who is coming from another denomination (such as PCUSA). Very recently, our presbytery has received two pastors from the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA). The new pastor in Wendell and the pastor in Roswell both came out of PCA and were immediately ordainable because they were seminary graduates, had already been ordained in a denomination that is similar to ours, and they were willing to affirm the theological convictions of our denomination.

5. Is the PCA that has the denomination that operates out of Ambrose School?

Answer: yes.

6. Do we have a ready pool of candidates / list of candidates with qualifications that we can look at?

Answer: not yet, but we will have a lot of applicants for this position. Boise is an appealing place to live. One factor that may get in the way of that would be COVID-19 restrictions – we don't know if there are more people looking to move or less people looking to move.

7. We have two questions we have to answer: 1. A new / more permanent location and 2. a new pastor. Are we doing both at the same time, or will they be one before the other?

Answer: We are going to continue to look for a facility. At the same time, we need to think about how we can grow as a church and how we can continue to grow our ministries. We have been looking for six years for a facility and so far, that search has been fruitless. Phil's conviction is that we should not let the building search paralyze us from continuing to grow our ministry and reach out to our community. The focus of this position is going to be outreach and

evangelism, and that is a huge need in our church. People in our community don't know that we exist. Phil personally believes that adding a staff person can really help us in that area.

8. Housing in this area (Boise, Treasure Valley) has no affordable places to live, and the cost of buying a house is high. We may have an issue trying to find housing. Another church in Boise brought a pastor who cannot find housing. The committee should look at alternatives to help finance buying a house or finding possible rental situations ahead of time. We can't solve the problem, but need to be aware that we may have to help and candidate look for housing. We may need to loan them money. It needs to be something that our committee has in mind. There are creative options that can be explored. For example, church members have entered into an equity-sharing contract to help the pastor buy a house, with the arrangement that when the house is sold some day the equity is shared by the stakeholders. Suggestion made that as the committee is put together there might be some folks that have financial background to consider this aspect.

9. In PCUSA, an Associate Pastor was not allowed to be hired with any sort of indications that they could become the Pastor / promoted up. Does EPC allow this?

Answer: In the PCUSA, it was not allowed that an Associate Pastor could become the Pastor. In the PCUSA, that rule was in place to prevent hostile takeovers. The EPC will allow it, but it is a high bar – it requires a $\frac{3}{4}$ vote of the Ministerial Committee to approve it and $\frac{3}{4}$ vote of the Presbytery. That does not affect the initial calling of an Associate, it only comes into effect in the event that an Associate Pastor becomes the pastor. Basically, what they want to know is: is the church behind this? Is it a peaceful and gracious and God-led thing that an Associate Pastor would be elevated to the Pastor position? There are safeguards built in but it is allowed. These standards are clearly called out in the Book of Order (BoG 10-4) with specific language regarding the consideration of Associate Pastor for the role of Pastor.