

October 8, 2023 Town Hall Meeting Highlights

On Sunday, October 8, 2023 consistory members held a Town Hall meeting for the congregation to update them on the search process for a new lead pastor. Below are the details they shared along with the questions members were able to ask.

Update given by Merlyn Sandbulte and Al Vermeer

1. Admin Team has decided to use a search firm to help us find our next lead pastor. In talking with other area churches who are or who have been vacant, most have decided this is the best way to go.
 - a. Currently, the Admin Team is interviewing 3 different companies with the hopes of having a decision in the next couple weeks.
2. The Admin Team began discussing what they feel are our top priorities in what our church needs as a lead pastor. Their list of priorities are broad at this point.

Questions from the congregation:

1. What are the priorities the Admin Team has discussed?
 - a. A future search team and admin team will continue to define these some more and will share when there is better clarity.
2. Will the congregation have input into these priorities?
 - a. The congregation is highly encouraged to seek out anyone in leadership to voice their thoughts and opinions. Leadership will then take it into consideration.
3. Where are the search firms from?
 - a. The firms we are interviewing are Midwest based but have networks that span the nation. These firms have successfully placed pastors in a church within our 3 county area.
4. What is the time frame with a search firm?
 - a. Once a contract is in place, a consultant will be on-site within 2-3 weeks to begin getting to know us. Once they feel they have a good understanding of us, within 10-12 weeks, they will present us with potential candidate names. A Faith search team will work alongside the firm and will review candidates and begin conversations with these individuals. Historically, firms have successfully placed a new pastor at a church within 6-9 months. However, there's no guarantee that's how long it will take us to find the right person with the right heart for our church. It is easier to fill a position in an urban setting than rural.
5. How many people will be on a search team?
 - a. In preliminary discussions there will be 7-9 people on a search team who will work with the firm's consultant. The consultant also has people working underneath them who have databases that reach people nationally.
6. Can a layperson offer pulpit supply?

- a. Currently, the Admin Team has lined up Pastor Mike and Chris to preach once a month. Internally, there are members who are available and more than capable of fulfilling pulpit supply.
7. Can members give pulpit supply suggestions?
 - a. Yes! Seek out someone in leadership or on staff and they will pass those names along for consideration to those who are organizing pulpit supply.
8. Does the ARC have resources?
 - a. Yes, we have been offered support from our Horizon network and the Dakota network.
9. Where is a need we can step into?
 - a. Wednesday and Sunday School teachers and subs are a high need
 - b. Additional support for adult education
 - c. Choose to be informed through this process! Read the letters and app notifications sent out and attend the meetings
 - d. Encouragement: wherever you are serving—do it well! You don't need a title of elder, deacon, etc. to serve the kingdom!
10. What's the transition plan for the Admin Team?
 - a. There has already been communication on who will take over certain tasks as new leadership steps into place at the beginning of 2024. The Admin Team is meeting more frequently than just once a month. Also, an Admin Team member sits down with the staff Monday mornings during their weekly staff meetings.

Encouragement from the congregation:

We elect our consistory members. Let's continue to support them. We need to have faith and trust in God that these members are acting in the best interest of the entire church.

There was encouragement to discern what makes Faith Church and Rock Valley valuable to the next person coming in. How can we market ourselves well?

And finally, above all else, we need to pray for guidance and unity in the Spirit as we go throughout this process.