

Dear members of St. Paul

The elders of St. Paul met February 15th with District President Richard Snow and Circuit Visitor Pastor Paul Beyer to discuss our vacancy and the calling process. President Snow shared two basic options: work through a normal vacancy and call process or work through an Intentional Interim Ministry and then the call process.

An Intentional Interim Pastor is often recommended after a long tenured pastor or after a traumatic end to a pastor's service. This pastor is trained to assist a congregation in dealing with its history, understanding its identity, healing from conflicts, and building on strengths. He also seeks to help the congregation find and become committed to its vision.

As elders, we understand that many of our members would like to call a pastor and get going, but history shows us that congregations like ours that don't choose an intentional interim end up with an unintentional interim, with the next pastor quickly taking another call due to unresolved issues and expectations. An intentional interim pastor receives a non-tenured call from the congregation to serve as pastor for 12 to 24 months. Our congregation, District, and intentional interim pastor would work together to develop goals and monitor progress.

Our expectations for this intentional interim is to

- 1- Help us work through grief caused by our conflicts and our pastor's departure;
- 2- Listen to the hurts and ideas of members;
- 3- Rebuild the trust level among the members;
- 4- Help the congregation rebuild its foundation based on God's Word;
- 5- Help the congregation define the leadership qualities desired in our next pastor;
- 6- Help the congregation establish biblical expectations for itself into the future.

This pastor will provide the normal duties of administrative leadership, lead worship, preach, administer the sacraments, teach adult Bible study, and provide pastoral care to members of the congregation he is serving. He will need some pastoral assistance and we as lay members will need to give extra effort and assistance as we are asking him to work with small groups and individuals to help us uncover the issues that need to be addressed and help us to be a healthy congregation. We will ask him to promote the outreach and mission emphases of the congregation and work on the specific goals of this intentional interim.

We have scheduled a congregation meeting for March 5 during the Bible class hour to discuss these two options and answer questions as we are able. We are also setting March 19 for a special voters' meeting to make an official decision. If the congregation chooses to engage an intentional interim, we can present a candidate and potentially issue a call. If you have questions before or after the March 5 meeting, please talk to an elder.

On behalf of the elders and in service to Christ and the members of St. Paul,
Rod Aden, Head Elder