



HANOVER STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

1801 N. JEFFERSON ST.
WILMINGTON, DE 19802-4709

Phone: (302) 658-5114
E-mail:
office@hanoverchurch.org

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Pastoral Transition Update

Dear Hanover Saints,

Here is the first news about Hanover's Pastoral Transition journey. Subsequent updates will be printed in our monthly newsletter, "The Hanover Herald". If special communication is needed in between "Herald" publications, we'll send it to you immediately in a special edition of "The Scoop."

On June 21, 2022, Rev. Cindy Kohlmann, Connectional Presbyterian, met with Session to guide us in both the spirit of, and procedures for, our pastoral transition time. Here are the main points from that meeting:

Covenant of Closure

After opening prayer and time for shared Scripture reflection, Cindy reiterated the importance of the Presbyterian Church (USA)'s policy regarding former pastors and their former congregations. This is across the denomination – not just at Hanover or just in the New Castle Presbytery.

The policy is that pastors who have concluded ministry with their congregations are no longer available for pastoral duties at their former congregations. While this may seem harsh initially, the reason is so that an incoming pastor is not encumbered by a former pastor's presence or influence. The policy also emphasizes the congregation's responsibility to look ahead and plan for a new pastor.

The Former Pastor, the Clerk of Session (on behalf of the Session & the congregation) and the Presbytery's Committee on Ministers & Congregations all sign a "Covenant of Closure", promising to follow this policy. Andy & I have signed this covenant and sent it to the Presbytery office.

Clarification of Titles

Bridge (or Gap) Pastor –serves a congregation for about 2 - 4 months, while the search for a Transitional Pastor is in progress

Transitional Pastor (formerly called "Interim") – serves a congregation for a year or two, taking a more active role than a bridge pastor. In addition to regular pastoral responsibilities, the transitional pastor helps the congregation to define its mission, to begin its pastoral search, etc.

Session's Approval

After discussion and reflection, Session felt that, because Hanover already has pastoral care coverage and worship leadership until early September, a bridge pastor won't be needed. Session unanimously approved beginning the search process for a Transitional Pastor.

Cindy then gave the Elders questions to help define what Hanover would be looking for in a Transitional Pastor and to help Presbytery identify ministers who would be good candidates for Hanover's consideration. The Session and Presbytery work together on this discernment.

If you have any questions, please contact me or any of the Elders. May we all be blessed as we travel this journey toward Hanover Church's next chapter of ministry to God's people!

Eloise Downing, Clerk of Session
clerk@hanoverchurch.org
302-304-0579