

February 25, 2019

From the Valley Board of Elders

We have some important news to share.

A few weeks ago, Jay Abramson informed the Elder Board that he believed God was making it clear that he was in the final phase of his ministry at Valley Community Baptist Church. After nearly 30 years in ministry with us and 25 as Senior Pastor, he announced that he would be retiring next year.

The elders accepted his decision, Valley staff was informed last week, and Pastor Jay made the announcement to all at the Congregational Meeting on Sunday, February 24. This was the next step in a process that began two years ago, when Pastor Jay announced that preliminary transition plans had begun, knowing that this decision would come at some future date.

There is much to share about what happens next. The most important part is that Pastor Jay has agreed to stay through July of 2020, and also graciously agreed to stay beyond that time if we haven't called a new Senior Pastor by then. This is, obviously, a pivotal time for Valley, and discovering God's will for the next leader of our church may take a while.

Here are the next steps in the Senior Pastor Transition, all in the next month:

- 1.** We launched a new page on our website devoted solely to the Senior Pastor Transition. You'll also find the link on our home page, and it will stay there until a new Senior Pastor is called. This page will serve as the home for our communication to the congregation throughout the process. You can find it at www.valleycommunity.cc/transition .
- 2.** The Elders will initiate the formation of an eight-person Search Committee, as mandated in our church Constitution.
 - The current four members of our Standing Search Committee will form half of the Search Committee.
 - The Elders will assign one Elder to the Search Committee.
 - The Elders will recommend three Valley members to also serve on the Search Committee.
 - The Committee will, ideally, represent the current make-up of our church (gender, age, ethnicity, etc.). All members of the Committee must have significant experience as a Valley attender and leader. We need your help with nominations for these three open spots. More on that at the end of this note.
 - We will use an outside search firm for this process. This is standard procedure for churches our size.

3. We will gather together for a special Congregational Meeting on Sunday, March 31, 2019. At that meeting, the Elder Board will announce which Elder it has selected for the Committee. The Board will also then recommend the three additional members to the congregation for its consideration and approval. We will also discuss next steps in the transition process.

What can you do this next month to help with the Senior Pastor Transition process? You can be ...

Praying. Pray for wisdom in the selection of our Search Committee members. Pray for Jay and Liz as they enter this final phase of their ministry here at Valley. Pray for our next Senior Pastor, whom God already knows even as we search. Pray for a smooth transition as Valley continues carrying out its mission and vision during this transition time.

Nominating. Help identify possible Search Committee members by nominating them for consideration! If the person you have in mind meets the criteria listed above, send the name to a special email address: transition@valleycommunity.cc. You'll also find a link to the email address on the Senior Pastor Transition page on the website.

Planning. Please plan to attend the March 31 meeting so that you're fully informed about the beginning of the search process and, if you're a member, vote on the three recommended additional nominees for the Search Committee.

Big change can be challenging for any organization or faith community. We have seen God's Providence over Valley throughout our 43 years, and we have complete faith He will once again guide us as we carry out our mission and vision during this crucial time.

And even as we reflect on the bittersweet news of our Senior Pastor's upcoming retirement, we rejoice with anticipation about what inspired directions God will take us next!

--- The Board of Elders