

Good morning,

My name is David Zeilstra and I am Chair of the Senior Leadership Team. I wanted to take a few minutes to make sure everyone knows that earlier this week Rev announced that after 43 years of Kingdom service he planned to retire from the ministry. He expects his last Sunday as our lead pastor to be on Sunday May 21, 2017, just a few short months away.

I share this news with mixed feelings. I am happy for Rev and Becky to have the chance to enjoy life together without the burden of being our lead pastor, but I will miss working closely with Rev on matters relating to the Church. I am also sad for the Church-as we will deeply miss his leadership, preaching and passion for people.

Under our governance structure, the responsibility for conducting a search for a new pastor falls to the Senior Leadership Team. In the past, we have successfully used a search committee to help us find a new pastor. Knowing this, the SLT at its January meeting approved the formation of a search committee and appointed me as Chair of that Committee. At this point I am the only official member-but Ken Vos, the Vice Chair of the SLT and Chair of our Personnel Committee-will either be an official member or ex officio member of the Committee-and will be working closely with me during this process. In the coming weeks, the SLT will approve additional members and the committee will start its work of looking for another pastor. If you have any questions as we go through this process please feel free to ask me.

I would also like to note that Ken and I have had a conversation with Gregg about Rev's decision. We plan to have more discussions with him as he thinks about what this change means for him and whether he has an interest in the lead pastor role as well as what the lead pastor position would look like.

This will, of course, be a significant change in the life of our church and I would ask that you please be in prayer for (i) Rev as he finishes up his work as ECRC and adjusts to retirement, (ii) the staff as they absorb and adjust to this change and (iii) the search committee as it is formed and it begins its work.

Thank you.