



PASTORAL SEARCH COMMITTEE UPDATE

SEPTEMBER 2022

“Greetings, Easthaven! My name is Mary Cathryne Woodward and I am part of the Pastoral Search Committee. We thought that it might be time to bring you a brief update. I don’t have any earth-shattering news, just an update to tell you where we’re at and where we’re going in the next few months.

Before I do that, I want to define some terms for you.

We are calling the next pastor, whoever he is, “Pastor Next”. So if you hear that term, we have not hired someone with the last name of “Next”. Truly, we’re just saying “Pastor Next”, whoever he is.

I also wanted to briefly remind you that Pastor Michael is here as our Interim Pastor. He is here with us so that he can shepherd us through this season of change. We are so thankful for him.

As a committee, we have met several times and we have been able to do a couple of things:

First, we have assessed the health of our staff. I am so blessed to tell you that our staff is strong, our staff has a great foundation, but also that our staff is tired. Our staff probably needs some encouragement. And so I want to encourage you as a congregation to love on our staff who are here and who are serving and who have served through some storms in the recent past.

We’ve also been able to assess through the Church Health Assessment that a lot of you did, the health of the church. We are a strong congregation, but like any congregation, we have things that we need to work on. We are excited to see how God moves us and grows us in the next few months and season of growth.

The next thing we are trying to evaluate is the community that is growing around us (who they are and what their needs are). But without doing much digging, we can say with confidence that we have a community around us that 1) is God-friendly that may be looking for a church or, 2) a community that knows nothing of God that needs to be brought in so that they can learn who Jesus is so that lives are changed. And I am so excited that Easthaven has not changed who they are. We are still about *Gathering, Growing, and Going* so that you can help us in reaching the community around us.

The next thing that we need to do is define some things about who “Pastor Next” is and what he will do and how he will function within the congregation and within the staff. In order to do that, we feel that it is necessary to bring together the Personnel Committee, the Executive Team, and the Pastoral Search Committee so that we can, in unity and on the same page, define those terms of who “Pastor Next” is and how he will function within this family. That’s what we are working on now!

On September 25, you can be praying for us. We will be meeting as three groups together to begin to define those terms so that the Pastoral Search Committee can move to the next step of seeking out and finding who that person is that God has for us.

If you have questions, comments, or concerns, please email us: pastoralsearch@easthaven.org

We hope you have a blessed week.”