

CROSSWINDS WESLEYAN CHURCH
SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING
July 8, 2009

As called for at the May 13, 2009, annual meeting, a special congregational meeting was held at approximately 7:00 pm. on July 8, 2009 at the church. The meeting was called as an open forum to discuss the search for a senior pastor.

No minutes were read or approved. No business was transacted. In the following record of questions and answers the secretary did not always know who was speaking, for that reason all names have been omitted.

Comment:

- Opinions should be voiced in a Christ-like manner.
- Respect each other's opinions.
- We are at a crossroads. Things have happened that have divided the church.

Question: What is the direction that we want to take the church?

Response:

- The Board should be acting in unison and then speak through the pastor or vice-chairman.
- We're not aware of a "new" direction.
- We are looking for the Lord's direction.

Question: Why are LBA minutes not appearing on the church web site?

Response: The minutes are there through April 2009. Apparently one link points to old minutes.

Question: Has John Allison expressed interest in returning as pastor?

Response:

- We are not aware of any expressed interest.
- District [New York District of the Wesleyan Church] policy expressly prevents this. It prevents undue pressure on a resigning pastor and returning could seriously affect his credibility.

Question: How can we contact John?

Response: The email address jallison@crosswindsonline.org will be effective until July 31, 2009.

Question: Are you saying that John cannot reapply? Jack [Connell] did.

Response: At that time the District "bent" the policy and the process "blew up". That reinforced the District's intent of enforcing the policy.

Question: Why not have many candidates speak to the church?

Response:

- First, we are limited in the number of candidates.

- The Board is careful to do due diligence in seeking candidates.
- The Board is not predisposed toward any candidate or type of candidate.
- The search process varies from church to church. In the Wesleyan denomination this is the Board's responsibility.
- You can't have a consistent congregation a number of weeks in a row.
- The congregation is not polarized around individual candidates as could easily happen.
- It shows the need for prayer for the Board.

Comment: I would encourage the congregation to increase prayer support, especially corporate prayer on Tuesday, Wednesday, and at Prayer Central.

Question: Can John or Jack never return?

Response:

- The presupposition is, "God has led me elsewhere."
- A former pastor would not be forbidden by the policy.
- Any candidate must be approved by the District Board of Administration.

Question: Has the Board approached Jack?

Response: Our confidentiality rule prevents answering this. We are free, however, to say that Mike Sherbino [who met with the Board at an exploratory meeting] has no one to take his present position and so will not consider candidacy.

Question: Many people have left. Why?

Response:

- We have talked with people who have left. Some have been interviewed.
- Reasons are diverse: style, volume, preaching style, service times, etc.
- There will no doubt be gain and loss with a new pastor.
- The work is about all of us: pastors, staff, congregation. God knows who the next pastor is.

Comment: We need to have a PhD in prayer: pray with purity, humility, and desperation.

Comment:

- Three years ago we were in the position of losing a man who did everything.
- Today we have a dedicated, experienced staff. Our staff is called by God and anointed.
- Prayer for the Board: yes! Prayer for the congregation: yes! But equally important prayer for the staff and volunteers.
- The conditions of the church are much better than three years ago.
- Don't forget that Jesus is still the lead pastor.

Comment: I suggest a 24/7 prayer vigil for God's leading. God will reveal who He wants as pastor.

Comment: The Board should explain New York weather to candidates.

- Bringing people [as pastor] from another comfort zone (weather, etc) can be a serious situation.
- Two years isn't much time for a congregation to get to know a pastor.
- The initial call is for 2 years. This is followed by either a 4-year or extended call. There are periodic reviews during an extended call.

Question: Are Board meetings open? Can there be more congregational involvement?

Response:

- Yes, except for executive session when necessary.
- The Board will be working on developing a path to leadership.

Question: Are we seeing the number and quality of pastoral candidates that would be expected?

Response:

- This is a problem in the Wesleyan denomination. Our size. We are one of the larger congregations and there are not that many candidates available.
- We started with a narrow search [the Wesleyan and similar denominations.] We expect more response as we expand the search outward.

Question: Is it a requirement that we have a single senior pastor?

Response:

- The Board is trying to be open to whatever is the sovereign leading of God.
- A senior pastor is the normal practice.
- It seems that in any style of leadership, someone will gravitate toward leadership.

Comment: Often after a long-term, popular pastor, the successor will have a difficult time.

Comment:

- I would challenge the Board to seek for a seasoned, experienced pastor.
- Increased exposure and identification of Board members and staff is of great importance.

Response: If you are going to call CWC your home, please be involved in all aspects of the ministry including the annual meeting and special meetings.

There was no further discussion and the meeting was adjourned at the call of the chair and with prayer at approximately 8:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Gary L. Swimley, Secretary