

## **PNC Address to FPC Congregation Sunday, August 2, 2020**

Good morning and greetings from your Pastor Nominating Committee. I am Marshall Brown and am happy to bring you an update from my fellow committee members Wendi Cimino, Ralph Davison, Sheri Evans, Stu Johnston, Will Martin, Rosa McNairy, Anne Shoemaker, Andrew Spainhour, Becky Veraar, and Libby Wakefield.

Before sharing information about our search, I must first take the opportunity to thank the congregation for the prayers of guidance for us that have been offered in worship for the past several weeks. Your intercession on our behalf could not have come at a more appreciated time in our discernment. We have felt blessed and encouraged to continue our process together – our gratitude is truly a cup that “runneth over”!

Our last communication to you was in mid- April. Since we were no longer able to continue visits to the home churches of our candidates for in-person worship, we brought each pastor and their spouse to Greensboro. Each candidate had a tour of our campus, a tour of the city, some serious conversations around finance and Human Resources, some small group fellowship, and dinner with the entire PNC. We were meticulous to a fault to maintain both social distancing and complete confidentiality. Airplane travel was not an option, so we applaud the efforts of each of our candidates to travel here by car.

They had many questions – about our history, our community, our budget, our residency program, our staff, our small groups, our children and youth programs, and our vision of the church in the future. The ongoing backdrop of social unrest in our nation impacted the conversations, as did global health concerns over the corona virus. Each and every one was gracious with their thanks, leaving us to believe that we had extended Christian hospitality in a safe, secure manner in these uncertain times.

The PNC has now entered a period of discernment. We resumed meeting in person as we discuss the merits of our candidates. Discernment is a mystery, and we are trying to allow for not only our discernment, but also that of our candidates. We plan to narrow to a smaller list of finalists, and will bring them back for additional meetings and interviews.

I want to thank Danny, Neil, Dolly and all of the FPC staff for the patience, guidance and leadership as we navigate through this most unusual of times!! We are getting closer to our completion, but I will use the analogy of climbing a mountain summit. We know we are getting near the top. But the terrain we have remaining is steep and extremely challenging. With the Holy Spirit leading our path, we look forward to arriving at the summit and presenting the 12<sup>th</sup> pastor of FPC Greensboro.

I close with insights from several of you in our congregation – member’s quotes lifted up in our 2019 Mission Study:

“New leadership will embrace the future while preserving the Presbyterian traditions. We need a powerful, dynamic pastor to lead us forward.”

“I hope pastors will invite members to be present at times and in places where needs in Greensboro are greatest and where pain exists.”

“I hope that we can be more diverse than in the past and attract all types of people to join us.”

“We have a strong, committed and loving membership. My prayer is that our future is built from this amazing past.”

“I pray that FPC will continue on it’s current path of being open to all perspectives and persuasions, keeping Jesus Christ and his ministry as a guide in our worship together and service to one another and our community.”

Let God’s people say.....”Amen”