



Important Questions

Town Hall Meeting
August 14, 2022

1. How soon can we elect a Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC)?

We prepared a diagram (other side) showing the steps from now until we can elect a PNC. Rev. Rhonda Kruse, Lehigh Presbytery Transitional Leader, is here to answer on behalf of Presbytery any follow-up questions on this timeline from the congregation.

In a nutshell here are the steps we need to go through before we can elect a PNC:

- Work through the problem-solving sessions on the issues that the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center identifies for us. These sessions will identify possible solutions to each issue.
- Based on the possible solutions, work to first settle on the right solution(s) for each issue and then begin working on implementation of that solution(s). Throughout this process we will seek guidance from Presbytery as needed and keep them updated on our progress.
- When Session believes that we are making good progress on implementing solutions for each issue we will ask Presbytery for permission to form a Transition Team tasked with conducting a Mission Study for First Presbyterian Church of Allentown (FPCA).
- The Mission Study essentially defines FPCA and what we feel God is calling us to do. This will enable us to determine the skills, experience, and characteristics we are looking for in our next lead pastor.
- Once Session and Presbytery approve the Mission Study, the Nominating Team will propose to the congregation a PNC that is to the best of their ability representative of the whole congregation. The PNC will begin the search process.

2. We heard that Session gave Pastor Jan Nolting Carter some assistance in recovering from the treatment she received from some FPCA members. What was it?

Session has decided that as a church we are obligated to help for Pastor Jan's recovery from the treatment she has received during her work here. Session agreed to provide her with ~\$4,500 to cover her medical insurance through the end of this year as well as a stipend of ~\$2,500 recovery coaching and counseling plus any Board of Pension contributions and taxes associated with this assistance.

Our Congregation has an obligation to care for all of our pastors, whether at the beginning or end of their ministry. This obligation of care is paramount when a pastor has been the subject of emotional and verbal abuse which has taken a toll on her personally and on her family. By providing this aid to our departing pastor, who has served this Congregation during a difficult two-year transitional period, we seek to demonstrate to our current pastors, as well as to those pastors who may be called to serve here in the future, that FPCA

cares for our pastors and will continually support them in their ministry. The cost of this support will come from unpaid salary to Pastor Jan during the period before a replacement for her is found.

3. What happens when Pastor Jan leaves?

Recognizing that Pastor Jan has accomplished most of the hard transitional work that needs to be done, Presbytery has agreed that we can search for either a full-time or a part-time bridge pastor to act as our head of staff in addition to their normal pastoral duties. Session has elected a small group of Session members (Chip Layfield, Trish Brown, and Kathy Matthews) to prepare the necessary job description for this position for Presbytery approval and interview and recommend to Session the right bridge lead pastor for our church. As with Pastor Jan, Session will hire the bridge lead pastor.

4. Who is the lead pastor until the bridge lead pastor arrives?

There will be no named lead pastor, instead Pastors Stephen and Taylor will act together as if the lead pastor was on an extended vacation or a sabbatical and unavailable to make decisions. In the very unlikely event that there is a decision that they need assistance with, the Clerk of Session will help them make the required decision.

