

TRANSITION COMMITTEE

At the church retreat in January, 2015, Gary West announced his pending retirement. Gary did not give a definite date at that time, but the church cabinet agreed that it would be beneficial to create a special committee to provide some guidance during this important transition in the life of Grace and Gary.

Cabinet members selected 13 folks to serve on this "transition committee": Sarah Adams, Kevin Angell, Randy Berryhill, David Bradley, David Comer, Nancy Davis, Doug Hendrix, Steve Kirby, John Koppelmeyer, Katelyn McMillan, Susan Rawls, Bryan Starrette, Lisa Wardo.

Their charge for the next year is to help Grace celebrate Gary's ministry, explore options for the search and selection of a new preacher, prepare Grace for the interim period, and especially to keep the lines of communication open between boards, members, Gary, etc.

The transition committee has no authority. The Church Cabinet is the governing body of this community of faith. The Personnel Committee oversees the responsibilities and employment conditions of the paid staff. The transition committee will gather information and examine various issues associated with this transition; make recommendations to the church cabinet; and work to keep the transition positive, open and celebratory.

The transition committee has met on several occasions. Jack Causey, friend of Grace and former pastor of First Baptist Statesville, met with the committee to talk about the interim time between Gary's departure and the selection of a new preacher. He has a lot of experience in this area as a church consultant and has been very helpful. He encouraged the committee to meet with Gary promptly to establish a time table for his retirement.

He led the committee in a discussion on what the next steps are for Grace in the wake of Gary's official announcement that he will retire on August 31, 2016.

The Transition Committee recommends the following timeline:

Immediately:

The cabinet (and others as needed) work with Gary prior to January's annual retreat to listen to and help plan his "farewell" project so that it can be announced at the retreat.

January-August, 2016:

Grace will celebrate Gary's ministry by participating in the project and other activities as planned. It is recommended that a committee be created in January to work on and oversee special receptions and other events honoring Gary's retirement.

By May 2016:

The Transition Committee will have a plan in place that determines what happens after Gary is gone in terms of an interim preacher or other arrangement. This plan will be presented to the Cabinet and community of faith for approval.

Jack stressed the importance of engaging the congregation in developing what kind of pastor Grace needs. He suggested small group discussions involving as many covenant participants as possible. He also recommended that the process not be rushed. Jack and others agreed that it is important for the community to go through the grieving process of losing a minister.

If Grace decides to continue using Jack's consultant/facilitator services, the cost will be \$2,000-\$3,000.

Grace covenant participants are encouraged to share their thoughts and ideas with the transition committee and to especially ask for clarification if information is unclear.