

From the Board

This month the Board shares two more questions and answers from the sabbatical grant application.

Describe the plans for covering pastoral functions during the pastor's absence, and for activities that will serve to renew the congregation as a whole.

Fulfilling the pastoral functions when the senior pastor is on sabbatical present challenges and opportunities. However, we see the value for Pastor Brown and for the congregation. We see the win-win potential. We are excited for what the congregation can learn about itself!

The Elders and Board recognize proactive planning makes for a successful sabbatical experience. The work of making application for the grant in April included conversations with the Pastoral Support Team. The April newsletter included our answers to two grant questions.

Pastor Brown meets with the Elders monthly. The focus of their time together is on leadership training and study. It is anticipated they will undertake most of the pastoral care for the congregation, coordinated by the chairperson. In cases of extreme emergencies, the senior pastors of our three lake area sister congregations may be called upon for support.

The annual Disciples leadership conference co-sponsored by the four lake area congregations is in February. Our Elders and Board will sustain our role as one of four equals in the program planning, worship, and presentations.

Lay leadership will conduct the December 29 combined worship service. This is an established tradition. We look forward to making the coming sabbatical journey the focus this year!

Visiting ministers will fulfill pulpit duties at the 8:30 and 10:45 services through the months of January, February, and March, and will coordinate with the themes of study materials the congregation will use. One resource featuring the message of transforming our faith is *Ten Signposts for Renewal* in Diana Butler Bass' book *Christianity for the Rest of Us*. This is just one good resource example we could choose. Our planning for sabbatical will be enriched by the conversations we have in picking our study resources. We aspire to learn new ways to "tell our story" as we grow in proclaiming the Good News!

The 5:00 worship experience has been grown to actively involve everyone in attendance. It is anticipated that the leadership core from that group will plan and lead this service.

We want to have in place a core group of volunteer congregants and community resource connections to begin the work of promoting our "We have a story to tell!" theme. Seeking volunteers for this work and assuring their training is work we want to have in place as the sabbatical begins.

An activities coordinating team will respond to activity concerns routed to them by the office administrator.

A facilities coordinator will lead a team to respond to concerns about the building and grounds.

An emergency response team will consist of the Board President, the Property Committee chair, and two additional volunteers with specific emergency response skills.

The Pastoral Support Team is a permanent committee that meets monthly with the Senior Pastor. During sabbatical this team will lead the book study. This team will give voice to the lessons learned by the congregation as we welcome Pastor Brown home!

The Board will work with the Pastoral Support Team and Elders to chart our path forward, building connections between the visioning process and the new elements of how we “proclaim” the Good News!

Tell how the pastor and congregation will celebrate the pastor’s leave-taking and return and share insights from the renewal program with one another after the pastor returns from the renewal leave.

A breakfast will be held between the 8:30 and 10:45 services on Sunday, December 22, 2019 to celebrate the beginning of Pastor Brown’s sabbatical. A sabbatical blessing will be part of all three services that day.

Pastor Brown will be back in attendance for Wednesday evening fellowship and study activities, including a “Welcome Home!” celebratory meal April 1st.

Pastor Brown will meet in regular session with the Pastoral Support Team on Thursday, April 2 and have his first small-group opportunity to share stories of renewal.

Later that same evening Pastor Brown will have the opportunity to reconnect with Disciples Men’s Fellowship. There will be great interest in Pastor Brown’s stories within this group!

Pastor Brown will return to the pulpit on Palm Sunday, April 5th as we begin our celebrations of Holy Week! A blessing of renewal will be part of all three services that day.

Disciples Women Fellowship provides such powerful leadership to our study and service missions! Pastor Brown will have the opportunity to reconnect with them in their monthly fellowship on Monday, April 13.

Pastor Brown will meet with the Board Thursday, April 16. The last element of the agenda each month is “Our Labor for the Future – Strategic Plan.” Common elements of our shared vision for the future of Community Christian Church will begin to take form as we share our stories! How to “proclaim” the Good News will take on a new vibrancy as Pastor Brown and the Board collaborate on “telling our story!”

The Elders will meet with Pastor Brown on Monday, April 20. Their shared stories of worship leadership and pastoral care experiences will be powerful!

As part of an annual tradition established during his tenure, the congregation will gather at Ha Ha Tonka State Park Sunday, April 19 for an early evening outdoor worship service and cookout dinner. This service and fellowship time will have the added element of celebration and sharing of stories!