



BackTalk

The inside scope on what's really going on here at the church. It's what inquiring minds want to know, - sort of.

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Evidently we have an interim pastor. How did that happen?

Our local elders have been working with the leadership of the *Florida Conference* on what steps need to happen in finding a new pastor since Pastor Phil Vasseur retired. The elders have worked together to assure there was a speaker each Sabbath, and that other immediate needs of the church were met.

Just this past week, the *Florida Conference* hired Dr. Bill Bossert to be our interim pastor until we process through a permanent pastor selection.

How does an interim pastor differ from a regular full-time pastor?

The conference has asked Pastor Bossert to serve our church family on a half-time basis. This means they're asking him to pick up the essential duties of a pastor that would include preaching, chairing various boards and committees, and serving the immediate needs of our church family.

How long will he be doing that?

We don't know at this point. Sometimes the seating of a new permanent pastor can take many months. And yet at other times, it can be done rather quickly depending on the church's desires and candidates availability. Our conference wishes to have a good pastoral match with us, and so they have a process they like to follow to ensure we find a pastor who will work well with us.

That sounds rather open ended.

It is somewhat. Our elders are working closely with the conference to begin the process as quickly as possible. It's their desire to not let the selection process draw on for months and months.

Bill Bossert is a member of our church already, right?

Yes, he is. He teaches one of our adult Sabbath School classes once a month, and is part of the leadership of Aftershock.

Can you tell us something about him? Why did the conference ask him to be our interim pastor?

Pastor Bossert has many years of pastoral experience. He has served as pastor of churches large and small. And he has his Doctor of Ministry degree from *Andrews University*. His doctoral thesis was focused on the how the cultural is constantly shifting and how that effects the ministries of the local church. His particular emphasis is on reaching youth and young adults.

Bossert has taught masters and doctoral students at our Seminary in Berrien Springs, MI. He is a frequent speaker for pastor training seminars, and has worked with local churches to develop new strategies for growth in our ever-changing world.

He has also written several articles and book reviews for *Ministry Magazine*, the *Advent Review*, and *Insight* magazine.

He and Michele Bossert have four adult children and three grandchildren.

Has he ever been an interim pastor before?

Yes. The *Southeastern California Conference* asked him to serve as a interim pastor at a church in San Diego for a couple of months some years ago.

Was he the speaker for our kindergarten graduation a few weeks ago?

Yes, he was. He also preached through the month of May for us, and now will do so pretty regularly going forward each week.

Does an interim pastor do baptisms, child dedications, personal counseling, etc.

Yes, those serves would be available as needed.

How do we reach him if we need too?

You can call him on his mobile phone at (775) 303-6080 or email him at wmbossert@gmail.com. Of course, you're always welcome to talk with him here at church.

I heard that Pastor Bossert called a meeting of the worship committee already this past week. Is that so?

Yes, he did. They met this past Tuesday night.

Our worship services have been changing a lot, and now more change recently. Did the committee talk about that?

Yes. Pastor Bill wanted to hear from each of the committee members, and desired to have the group assess where we are and where we might need to adjust. Some of those suggestions and ideas discussed will need more time to develop, and others might happen right away.

Like?

For example, there has been some discussion about starting a second worship service on Sabbath morning. He heard that idea of such an addition was discussed and almost happened some time back. The committee listened to some suggesting that perhaps a second service might be added to help broaden and meet the needs of more people.

A two service model might have one service that tended to have a more traditional style, and one that would have a more contemporary feel. Many churches across North American are having two different service worship styles to meet the worship needs of more people.

How would that work? Would they run at the same time, or would one meet at 11 AM and the other some other time?

Details of how that would work will take some careful thought and discussion. As Pastor Bill told the committee, he'd like to see if there is enough interest and support for two service. If there is, then it become a real possibility.

When?

That's yet to be determined. But if enough would enjoy a more traditional service and could support it, it could happen relatively quickly.

Oh, hey, what happened at the Business Meeting last Saturday night?

The business meeting's main purpose was to discuss the MUSTeam's Report. The MUSTeam's report is somewhat like the old Nominating Committee's report that selected the church officers and other various leaders for a two-year term. Under Pastor Phil's leadership, the MUSTeam was endeavoring to help the leadership of the church reorganize with a more missional structure. It was quite an undertaking, with lots of hours devoted to the task by the members of the committee.

But then Pastor Phil retired. His vision and leadership were dropped into the laps of the committee members. After giving their report, the church family decided to postpone implementation of the ideas and structure of the report until a permanent pastor can be seated here at the church. After a lot of discussion and possible optional solutions offered, the church family voted that postponing the starting of the new officer structure was probably the most reasonable decision.

But what about all the current officers and leaders? Wasn't their term supposed to end June 30th?

Yes, but the church family is asking those current leaders if they wouldn't hang on a few more months until a permanent pastor is seated. They felt that he or she could then lead and help us implement any changes necessary.

How long will that take?

The process of seating the permanent pastor could take some time. It is the Florida Conference that actually hires the pastor, and the conference leadership will want to work closely with our church family in selecting that person. Depending on the situation, making that change can take time. But our conference wants us to be happy with whoever is finally asked to serve here.

What role does our local Elders play in this transition?

Fortunately, we have a group of elders who've been working carefully on tasks of keeping the church working together.

They met thursday night, and among other items they discussed, the process of getting a permanent pastor assigned was on their agenda.

But how does that work if the conference does the hiring?

The conference ministerial leadership team really does want to listen to the needs and wishes of the local congregation. Pastor Rudy Alvir has already visited with our church board. Pastor Rudy is our southern Florida ministerial representative. He was instrumental in having the conference ask Bill Bossert to serve as our interim pastor.

Our elders here have been in contact with Pastor Rudy and are expressing that they would like to get the process of pastoral selection moving forward now. They seemed to all agree that right now we need to work together in getting that done now for the sake of the church family's current needs.

What else did they discuss thursday night?

A good deal of the discussion focused on how our church family can come together on what church should be and how we can move together in the future. They sensed that our recent church business meeting was a healthy moment for us. At that meeting, seeing where people stood was a very good thing to understand. The business meeting indicated the pressing need to regroup on what we're doing. Pastor Bill recognized that we aren't all together on a "shared vision" of our ministry here. That was good to know, and opened the door to many opportunities for working more closely together.

Anything else they talked about?

The work of the Worship Committee was shared with the elders. They understood that right now, our process of change needed to put on hold while we work together on a "shared vision" of our ministries. Finding that vision together is something our church family will need to commit time and energy towards. The elders are looking to see how we can do that together soon.

But a lot of us already know what we want.

That is probably true. But simply doing what we want may not be the best way to go in growing our church for Christ. When a church works towards a shared vision of what our church is going to look like and where we want to go, then all of us can sense our role in accomplishing our ministry together.

Why can't we just go back to what we were doing?

Because that wouldn't be the shared vision of the church family. Churches who work together and develop a shared strategy find they can do incredible things. And they all rejoice in what they're doing together.

Do you really think everyone will buy into that?

Oh, probably not everyone. But when the vast majority of the church family sees and understands what is happening and where the church is headed, they get excited. When they come together on what they're doing, then moving forward with ideas becomes easy. If the church family understands the "why" something is being done, they already are supportive of different ministries and approaches that help that shared goal or vision.

When is that going to happen?

Depending on the timing of selecting the permanent pastor, the process could start relatively soon.

Great Book to Read!

Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus, a Devout Muslim Encounters Christianity by Nabeel Qureshi. Zondervan 2014

Qureshi's book is an incredible story about how he, as a Muslim, struggled with Christianity. Qureshi shares his own struggle with the doctrinal issues between his Muslim faith and the claims of the Gospel. Well worth reading! Available from Amazon.com.