

Leadership Continuity Team— 11/03/19

Congregational Update #1

A few weeks ago, at the conclusion of his message Pastor Gary shared with you that he's aiming to make a transition in ministry somewhere around June of 2021. At that time he won't step away from ministry altogether, but he will officially retire from his leadership here at Hope Missionary Church and scale back the pace of his ministry schedule.

On that same day, Pastor Gary also shared with you that the leadership of Hope Church had established a team of people to help guide us through the next steps. This group is called the Leadership Continuity Team, and they've been working on laying the groundwork for a successful and positive transition. Today I'm pleased to introduce you to this all-star team that I have the opportunity to lead... as well as sharing with you our purpose.

The team members are shown on this slide, and their names are Andy Ault, Pastor Gary Aupperle, Steve Baker, Julie Eicher, Tammie Imel, Pastor Chris Kuntz, Bob Roebuck, Kerry Schamerloh, and Greg Thornton. We're pretty excited about the folks who make up this group, and we hope you are as well.

The idea of establishing a Leadership Continuity Team finds its birth clear back in 2016 when the Board of Deacons read and discussed this book. It's called "Next: Pastoral Succession That Works." Pastor Gary—exhibiting his customary humility—sensed that it was time for the leadership of Hope Church to begin to think about the next stage of senior pastoral leadership, and he introduced the book to the board for their annual study. After processing the information contained in that book, the Board of Deacons then created this team in March of 2017. Over the course of the months that have followed, a couple of the team members have themselves transitioned, but the purpose has remained consistent.

What is that purpose? It's pretty simple, actually. The Leadership Continuity Team is tasked with seeking God's heart for the best transition possible in our senior pastoral leadership in order that Hope Missionary Church will continue to encourage believers to know, grow and go. Perhaps a simpler way of saying it is

that this team is earnestly pursuing God's way to provide the smoothest transition from one senior pastor to the next—not for the purpose of promoting Hope Church, but for the purpose of promoting God's plan for Hope Church to continue its purposeful ministry in our community and around the world.

In order to accomplish this purpose, the Leadership Continuity Team has been researching, observing, and speaking with some who have experience with similar transitions. It's been a highly educational experience for us, and we're eager to keep on learning! As we've been learning, however, we're also hard at work. We're assembling several documents that will be quite useful in the months ahead of us, and we're laying out the next steps in the process.

Above all else, I want you to know that this Leadership Continuity Team has been very intentional about bathing this whole process in prayer. From its very first meeting, the team has been seeking God's heart and leading. We want the individual whom God wants here at Hope Church. At each meeting—and in between our meetings—we consistently ask Him to remove us from the process so that we don't get in the way of His will.

And that's what I'm here today to ask of you as well. Will you join us in bathing the leadership transition at Hope Church in prayer? It's what Pastor Gary asked us to be doing when he shared with you a few weeks ago. The very best thing each of us can be doing individually—and that the church can be doing corporately—is praying. We'd ask you to pray specifically for three things:

1. Pray for Pastor Gary and Kay as they continue to humbly lead us in the months ahead. Ask God to preserve and protect them... and to prepare them for a new way of life and ministry.
2. Pray for the Leadership Continuity Team as they genuinely seek God's heart and leading.
3. Pray for the next senior pastor of Hope Missionary Church—wherever he may be. Ask the Lord to begin preparing his heart for a new way of life and ministry.

You'll be hearing regular updates from our team as we move forward in this important process. We want to be as transparent as possible with you so that you'll best know how to pray.