

MORE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

- 1. Can I provide input and feedback during the process?** We encourage and welcome any feedback you have, and request that you submit it to the Succession Team via succession@stonehillprinceton.org. Please understand that certain phases of the process are confidential, so we may not be able to reply. For example, the names of potential candidates are highly confidential.
- 2. Are Pastor Matt and Karen OK with all of this?** Since Matt's initial announcement to the elder board, each step of the way Matt and Karen have been involved in this process, and have let us know repeatedly, that they feel at peace that the Lord is leading them and Stone Hill into a new phase of life.
- 3. Will we have a celebration for Matt and Karen and their many years of service?** Absolutely! There is a lot to celebrate. We will honor and celebrate Matt and Karen's service in a variety of ways.
- 4. Will Matt preach in the future?** After July 2020, the primary preacher will be our new senior pastor. Matt will preach, as he does now, until the new Senior Pastor arrives.
- 5. We heard very specific dates regarding interviewing and hiring at the Annual Meeting. How can we be certain regarding dates?** What you heard at the Annual Meeting was a "sketch" of the timeline. The plan is approximate and subject to change. The tasks, timelines, and deadlines are particularly fluid in 2020. Specifically, as we identify the successor pastor and start to accommodate his timetable and family needs our timeline will most definitely change. The timeline is an overview of the process. It is an example of how faith and planning coexist.
- 6. What if I am or someone I know is interested in the position?** Those interested in applying for the position should contact The Slingshot Group directly at info@slingshotgroup.org.
- 7. What can I do to make this a smooth transition?** Pray earnestly for the Candidate Review Team (CRT), for our yet-unknown senior pastor and his family, for Pastor Matt and Karen, office staff, pastors, and elders: for wisdom to know what to do, boldness to do it, and joy, unity, and peace throughout the process.
- 8. What if we don't like the the process?** Change is always difficult. We ask that you pray to the Spirit to help you discern whether it is just a response to "something different" which can be overcome, or whether there are legitimate areas of disconnect and concern. If the latter, approach an elder or familiar pastor to help discern next steps.

9. **Who chose the CRT?** The Board of Elders, after prayer, reflection, and consideration, asked individuals to join the CRT. Those individuals who accepted the invitation are the members of the CRT.
10. **How is the search and approval process determined?** As per the Church By-Laws: “In the event of a vacancy in the position of the Senior Pastor, a pastoral search committee shall be appointed by the Board of Elders. When a candidate is deemed acceptable by the Board of Elders, he shall be presented to the congregation for approval by three-fourths of the membership voting.”
11. **What is the search and approval process?** The elders have worked with the Candidate Review Team to develop a profile of our desired candidate. The church is also working with a search consultant, Slingshot Group slingshotgroup.org to identify possible candidates in a national search. The CRT will review candidates and bring forward recommended candidates to the elders.
12. **What are we looking for in a new pastor?** The Bylaws give specific requirements: “The Senior Pastor shall be a man whose life conforms to the Scriptural standards for an Elder (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9 and 1 Peter 5:1-5) and who subscribes to the doctrinal statement of the church. He shall minister to the spiritual and eternal welfare of the entire assembly through the preaching and teaching of the Word, seeking to edify the saints and win the lost for Christ.”
13. **Will we hire an interim pastor?** We do not plan to do so at this time.
14. **What input does the congregation have in the succession process?** The congregation is invited to submit comments and ask questions at any time. Generally, the search process is highly confidential and we will not be able to share information about particular candidates. When a candidate is deemed acceptable to the Board of Elders, i.e. a particular person is identified as the candidate recommended by the Board, information about the candidate will be shared with the congregation. The candidate will be invited to Princeton, will meet congregants and preach a sermon on a particular Sunday. He will then be presented to a meeting of the congregation and if three-fourths of the members vote approval, he will be offered the position.
15. **How long does the search and approval process take?** We are advised that nine to fifteen months is typical.
16. **Can all the best candidates be presented to the congregation so that the congregation can vote for the best candidate?** The search for a new pastor is governed by our by-laws and led by the congregation’s elected Board of Elders. The board has engaged a consulting firm to provide their years of experience and

wisdom. The wisdom they have shared with us is that it is best for the congregation to only consider one candidate at a time. A particular drawback for voting on more than one candidate at a time is we run a high risk that no candidate receives the required consensus. Simply stated, if the congregation is asked to vote on three candidates, it is unlikely that one would receive the required 75% approval. Voting on one candidate at a time follows the norms of churches like ours, the governance laid out in our bylaws, and encourages unity.

17. **How is the position publicized?** We sent our Candidate and Position Profile to our consultant, The Slingshot Group. They will then schedule an internal meeting with their fifty-five search associates. Our assigned senior leadership consultant, Todd Clark, presents Stone Hill Church to these associates. The Slingshot Group then reaches out to their extensive network and the search process has begun. In addition, we will publish the opening on our website and make known the our open position with The Gospel Coalition and like-minded seminaries, organizations and Pastors. The Slingshot Group will review candidates from whatever source they arise.
18. **Who sets the compensation package for the new Senior Pastor?** The Board of Elders sets compensation for all pastors and employees of Stone Hill Church.
19. **Can the current Stone Hill pastors apply for the Senior Pastor position?** Yes, if they wish to apply, they may do so.