



2100 West Friendly Avenue
Greensboro, NC 27403

Friends,

Upcoming on July 15 is the last of First Friends' big conversations in our interim process. We are tremendously excited, and we hope that you are, too. The process so far has given First Friends the opportunity to more clearly and deeply define who we are, what values we hold most dear, and how we want to work together to live out those values. The final conversation takes all that we have learned so far and uses it as a lens to focus our thinking about what qualities we are looking for in our next pastor!

While we are extremely excited to take this step with you and, in so doing, to formally start the pastoral search phase of the interim process, we want to acknowledge that we share feelings of sadness and regret with some of you. July simply is not the best time to hold a discussion this important, and we recognize that some of you may have to miss the discussion due to summer travel. On the other hand, we balance that concern against the sense that much of First Friends is excited (perhaps even impatient) to keep the process moving forward toward selection of a new pastor.

We feel your concerns, and we share many of them ourselves. For us, the tension between maximum participation versus keeping the process on pace is almost heartbreaking. On balance, we have decided that we must uphold our commitments to the process and to the timing of this process that was approved by the Monthly Meeting. We will take several steps to try to accommodate and include the voices of those who will be unable to attend on July 15.

The first of these steps is the publication of a series of recommendations from the Transition and Search Committee. We have been listening and considering all the many things that you have shared with us in the recent months. The vast majority of what you have said affirms the strength and vitality of our spiritual faith community. However, you have also directed us toward certain areas where we can work together in ways to make us even stronger. We have drafted a document that restates much of what we've heard, and also makes some specific recommendations for ways in which First Friends can act on these areas for improvement. This document will be circulated in a variety of ways: through this email distribution, at Sunday morning worship services, at Monthly Meeting, and at the July 15 discussion. If you don't receive it any of these ways, feel free to ask at the office, or ask any of the Transition and Search Committee members.

Secondly, some of the topics relating to the new pastor will be made into a survey which can be completed by anyone from First Friends (whether or not you were able to attend on July 15). This will be made available after the July 15 discussion.

Finally, if you feel that you are not able to share what you need to say at the meeting or through the survey, feel free to contact and talk (or email, or text message, or whatever works for you) with any of the Committee members. We would love to hear input from as many people as possible.

Thank you for taking this journey with us. We feel the strains that it has created at times, but we also have become even more convinced of the importance of this process and that it will make First Friends a greater place to worship together!

Walking with you in the Light of Christ,

Transition and Search Committee

Mary Elizabeth Barwick
Bill Davis
MacGregor Frank
Bill Hass

Beth Joyce
Emily Riley
Margaret Rowlett
Janice Wood