

# MCCC Ministry Transition FAQ

## 1. About Pastor Chad & the Delaney Family

- Where is Pastor Chad going? Why is he leaving?
  - *As Pastor Chad mentioned in his letter...God calls us in and God calls us out. There has been a shift in his call to ministry drawing him to work more directly with families and children. He will be working for Bellefaire JCB, which is a large mental health organization that meets the needs of children and families in crisis.*
- Did the denomination make him leave or push him out?
  - *Absolutely not! The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) have a congregational call system that allows pastors and congregations to make their own decisions regarding ministerial leadership. The Region will be present to help support and facilitate these connections.*
- When is Pastor Chad leaving?
  - *Pastor Chad's last Sunday will be February 22nd. His last Sunday to preach will be February 15th. On the 22nd, we will have a celebratory send-off as part of our morning worship.*
- Is the Delaney family moving? What will the other members of the family be doing?
  - *The Delaney family will not be moving and still be living in Hiram. By Fall, all three of the kids will be off to college and Christin will continue working as a School Counselor in Streetsboro Local Schools. Although Pastor Chad is required by his ministerial code of ethics to remain away from the congregation during this transition, it's possible that family members may pop in on occasion.*
- How will Chad's leaving us affect our finances at MCCC?
  - *Our hope is that Pastor Chad's leaving will not affect our finances. Our pledges are a spiritual commitment to God and all the work and ministry we do together remains! We hope that our church members and contributors will honor their pledges and continue offering their time, talent, and treasure to MCCC as we head into a bright future!*
- I've heard Chad can't have any contact with us after he leaves, is that true?
  - *According to the Ministerial Code of Ethics of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) for ordained ministers, former pastors are not permitted to be in touch with the congregational community in which they have served for at least 1 year after the settled pastor has been called. This allows for a smoother ministerial transition period for the new pastor to get to know people and not be undermined in any way by the looming presence of the previous clergy person. That being said, if Pastor Chad sees you in the supermarket, he's not going to run the other way! He will always need to make a strong boundary around presence and conversation regarding church-related issues.*
- Can Pastor Chad still do my funeral or wedding someday?
  - *According to the Ministerial Code of Ethics, the answer to that question is: No. Someday, hopefully soon, MCCC will have a new interim and then a settled pastor who you will connect with and form a spiritual relationship with. It is critically important for new pastors to be present for church members in times of difficulty to build trust and forge deep connections. Remember that 17 years ago Pastor Chad was NEW and had that same opportunity.*
- What can we do to make this transition easier and better for the Delaney family?

- *Pastor Chad is sincere in wanting to spend time with people before he goes. He would love to see you in worship and/or to get together for coffee or a meal. More than anything the family appreciates your prayers and support as this has been a very difficult decision and will make a big impact on them as well. We are a church family and want to support each other through this.*

## **2. What Happens Next: Interim Ministry & Leadership**

- Who is our leadership team right now?
  - *The current leadership group consists of Elder Co-Chairs, Nora Brant and Katie Baird, Finance Committee Chair, Brian Hurd, Board Vice-Chair, Steve Hurd and Board Chair, Rick Painley.*
- If there are pastoral emergencies, who do we talk to after Chad leaves?
  - *In the short term, just like when Chad would leave for sabbatical, The Elders will be available for pastoral emergencies. When we hire an Interim/Transitional Minister, he/she will perform those duties.*
- What are we going to do for Lent and Easter?
  - *At the suggestion of our Regional Minister, Rev. Allen Harris, we are going to employ a "bridge pastor" to shepherd us through Lent. The Worship Team has also purchased a Lenten program through a group called Sanctified Arts. We have used their materials previously for both Lent and Advent and found them to be quite valuable.*
- Are we going to have part-time pastoring (either short-term or longer-term)?
  - *We will have a "bridge pastor" to shepherd us through Easter.*
- Will we have an interim pastor? Who chooses them? Will the congregation have a say as to who that might be?
  - *Rev. Harris, suggests that we have an Interim minister (also referred to as a Transitional Minister.) Rev. Harris will send names to MCCC and our Elders will review their resume to ensure an appropriate fit. Because time is short, we will leave this task to our capable Elder group. The congregation will be very involved in the church profile and the Search and Call Committee to call our settled pastor.*
- How long will we have the interim pastor?
  - *We estimate having the Interim Minister for approximately 1 year.*
- What will be the role of the interim pastor, what will they do or not do? Is there anything that we can be doing now to be helpful or to help prepare for this leader's success?
  - *The Interim Minister will assume the duties of a full time pastor. The current leadership team will create a Transition Team. This Transition Team will be the MCCC welcome wagon and begin to work with the congregation and Interim Minister to develop a church profile. Eventually, the Transition Team will hand over its work to the Search and Call Committee.*
- Will Dwelling in the Word &/or Life Study continue? Who will lead them?
  - *Over the years, Life Study has had multiple leaders and that will continue until we have hired an Interim/Transitional Minister. The Dwelling in the Word group continues to have discussions about their next leader.*
- How will our congregation onboard a new interim or permanent leader?
  - *Rev. Allen Harris will recommend an Interim (Transitional) Minister. The Elders will review that person's resume to make sure it's a good fit for MCCC. Please see the next section for discussion on a permanent leader.*

### 3. The Search for a New Pastor

- Will the denomination help us through this process?  
*Yes, our Regional/State Church, the Christian Church in Ohio, has a defined process in place, with documents to help guide our process thoroughly and thoughtfully. Regional Minister Rev. Allen Harris, and our Regional Elder, Rev. Terry Bartlett will be assisting us. Rev. Harris has been corresponding with, and has met with MCCC congregation leaders.*
  
- What is the process to get a new pastor? How does that get decided?  
*The Christian Church in Ohio will manage the recruitment of pastor candidates. Part of this process is presenting a Congregational Profile, job description, Mission and Vision Statement and other relevant information for candidates. A Pastoral Search Committee will be formed to steer the process at MCCC. This committee will screen and interview candidates, then present a recommended candidate to the MCCC Board and congregation for approval.*
  
- How will the congregation be involved in searching for and deciding to call a new pastor?  
*There will be many opportunities for the congregation to participate in the process to call our new pastor. There will be forums, listening sessions, a “Congregational Cafe”, surveys and other means to have every voice heard. There will be opportunities to be involved in creating our Congregational Profile, which will help us discern and articulate our core values, mission, strengths, and our unique character. YOUR input is important, and vital!*
  
- When will we get a new pastor?  
*It is anticipated that this process will take approximately one year. A hopeful timeline would be that a call will be made, accepted, and a new pastor will join us by the summer of 2027.*
  
- Is there anything that we can be doing now to be helpful or to help prepare for this leader's success?  
*Yes! Prayerfully consider offering your gifts to one of the committees currently being formed (ie, the Transition Team) or what role or office you could hold that will see Mantua Center Christian Church smoothly enter its 3rd century.*