



PART-TIME PASTOR OF MISSION & MINISTRY INFORMATION UPDATE

The Search Committee for the Part-time Pastor of Mission & Ministry has continued to meet over the last number of months and is now at the point of recommending to the church Pastor Dave Lewis of Cleveland, GA to assume the role. Having confirmed such a direction with the Board of Trustees, we have invited Pastor Dave and his wife, Carol, to spend a few days with the congregation the weekend following Easter. They will arrive in Mount Bethel on Thursday, April 8th and stay through Sunday, April 11th, meeting with the church in numerous smaller sessions and culminating with Pastor Dave preaching at both worship services on Sunday morning. We certainly hope you will actively participate in the weekend.

In preparation for that time, we are providing you the following F.A.Q. sheet regarding Pastor Dave and his potential ministry in Mount Bethel. We will also be holding a town-hall style meeting on Wednesday, March 31st at 5:50pm at Tuscarora following the evening meal. You are also welcome to contact the elders with questions at elders@mountbethelchurch.org.

What is the nature of the ministry we are asking Pastor Dave to do?

The Pastor of Mission and Ministry (PMM) is called to pastoral ministry in areas specifically related to the operation and advancement of the church. The position's focus is on developing and shepherding the church's volunteers, leaders, and ministries. The PMM will focus primarily on the people God has already called to His Church, but with them, will also seek to effectively reach those who remain outside of it. In his role, the PMM will work closely with the staff and volunteer leaders to intentionally develop ministries that lead unbelievers to faith in Christ and lead established believers toward maturity in Christ. (A complete job description can be obtained by contacting the church office at office@mountbethelchurch.org.)

How did the Committee find Pastor Dave?

Pastor Chris was introduced to Pastor Dave in January of 2008 through a mutual friend at Northpoint Community Church in Alpharetta, GA. At the time, Pastor Dave was Director of Care Ministries for Northpoint, a position he served for over 9 years until leaving to begin the Basic Idea Ministries. In both roles, Pastor Dave was and is primarily involved in training and equipping individuals to lead and develop relational ministries. Since that initial meeting in 2008, Pastor Dave has led numerous Couple's Retreats at Tuscarora.

Would Pastor Dave and his wife, Carol, be moving to Mount Bethel to fulfill this role?

No. Pastor Dave and Carol would remain in Georgia, close to one of their three grown children and younger grandchildren.

If Pastor Dave continues to live in Georgia, how often would he be in Mount Bethel?

For the first 5–6 months, Pastor Dave would be in Mount Bethel for two consecutive weeks each month. The primary goal of the initial months would be relational development and ministry familiarization. After the initial 5–6 month period, his time in Mount Bethel would be re-evaluated in conjunction with the Board of Elders and a new schedule collaboratively determined in accordance with the needs of the church and the position. It has been agreed that his time there-after would necessarily include two consecutive Sundays each month. While we realize that there may be an outlier month where such a schedule is logistically impossible, all agree that somewhere between 8 and 14 days is the ideal time for him to spend in Mount Bethel each month.

How would Pastor Dave be involved when he is not in Mount Bethel?

Pastor Dave would participate virtually in weekly staff meetings and other meetings pertinent to leading and fulfilling the ministry to which he has been called. He would maintain set hours and easyways of contact so that meetings can be done online. The Covid situation has forced us to use methods of holding services and meetings that we didn't use much or at all prior to 2020, but now these online formats are more user-friendly and, of necessity, more commonly engaged.

Would Pastor Dave continue leading The Basic Idea Ministries?

Yes. The Basic Idea Ministries will continue to function, with Pastor Dave serving in a leadership capacity as time allows. However, Mount Bethel Church would become his primary commitment and the church's scheduling would be his first priority.

Would Pastor Dave's wife, Carol, travel with him?

Yes, some to most of the time. The Lewis' still have responsibilities and family commitments in Georgia, so Carol would not be able to come with Pastor Dave every month.

Where would Dave and Carol stay while in Mount Bethel?

Provided that the process moves forward as recommended by the Search Committee, the Trustees are currently speaking with Tuscarora about a quasi-dedicated space on their grounds.

How will the church pay for this new position?

Pending congregational approval, the entire salary for the first year will be paid from the Towards Tomorrow in Ministry Fund which has a current balance of approximate \$97,000. Subsequent years will be split between the Towards Tomorrow in Ministry Fund and the Operating budget. A detailed salary package would be presented to the church should a call be extended.

How does Pastor Dave align with the theology of the Church of the Lutheran Brethren?

Pastor Dave was ordained in the Baptist Church in 1994. He remains a part of the Baptist church. He has worked through the CLBA's Statement of Faith both individually and with Pastor Chris, giving significant attention to *We Believe: Commentary on the Statement of Faith* published by Faith and Fellowship Press. While Pastor Dave holds a different conviction regarding the sacraments, we share convictions regarding discipleship, evangelism, the church, and most other theological matters. The Elders have talked through this significantly with Pastor Dave, and both believe the theological similarities far outweigh the theological differences and will not be a hindrance at all to the fulfillment of the position and the strengthening of the church.

The following are some of Pastor Dave's thoughts regarding the potential of serving Mount Bethel Church in this capacity.

Why do I want to serve in the role of Pastor of Mission and Ministry?

When Pastor Chris and I first discussed the staff position of Pastor of Mission and Ministry, I immediately became excited about the thought of serving at Mt. Bethel. It was an opening in my heart that hasn't closed in the 9 months or so since our initial discussion. The following is a list of some of the reasons I am very open

to the possibility if God should lead you and us together:

- As a pastor/teacher, God's calling on my life is to "equip saints for the work of service" and to thus participate in seeing God build His church so that the gates of hell will not prevail against it.
- My long-term friendship and fellowship with Pastor Chris make me very excited about working alongside him, serving the congregation and staff of Mt. Bethel Lutheran Brethren Church and the surrounding community.
- Having led four conferences at Tuscarora between 2009 and 2020 and having met some of the staff and members of MBLBC, I would enjoy getting to know the people more. The discussions Pastor Chris and I have had piqued my interest in the potential of serving the church as we discussed the very special congregation God has assembled there and the potential for reaching the community.
- God's call on my life also includes a specific passage from Malachi 4:5-6, to "turn the hearts of fathers(parents) to their children and children to their fathers(parents)." The position would foster a comprehensive approach to discovering, building, and engaging

the members of families in the church and community to build a relationship with Jesus and each other...starting at home.

- Equipping the church members and launching ministries to reach into the community with the Gospel message seems to be integral in this role.
- Facilitating a fresh approach to making disciples in churches has been a privilege God has given me over the years. Helping people know how loved they are then enabling them to give God's love freely gives me great joy and satisfaction as God does His great work.
- Though it goes without saying, I will say it: I only want God's best for you and for me and Carol. As you and we have prayed, God has kept this door of potential service open for several months now. We will submit to His will and your call or your choice to go another direction. I realize this is a new step with part-time ministry and some virtual ministry being parts of this role, but I am excited about the possibilities if God leads us together.

How would using both the onsite and online environments make it possible to do a good job as Pastor of Mission and Ministry?

Since Carol and I have actually been using these environments extensively for the past 10 years, we have some experience with the pros and cons of this combination of environments. We have found that the online/video conferencing format works well when the onsite/in-person training comes first. Establishing a relationship with the people in the ministry through person-to-person contact individually, as couples, or in groups will give us a chance to really know each other. During those times I will have the opportunity to hear what priorities are most important, what is working, what ministries are most effective, and where new ministries may be developed.

Do I think it will work for me to serve as Pastor of Mission and Ministry without being a full-time resident of Mount Bethel or a full-time staff member?

I do think it will work, or I would never have pursued the role. Of course, there is no actual guarantee of results. God has been so faithful in providing laborers for His harvest and then equipping them for service in the places where He has called us to serve that I have no doubt He is in this whole process. The scripture in Ephesians 3:20-21 says that God is able to do even more than we can ask or imagine. From my discussions with the elders, search committee, and Pastor Chris, I believe we are trusting God for real revival not only in the church but in the community.

I want to be useful in the church in equipping saints to be disciples who make disciples of Jesus Christ and are unashamed of the Gospel; I want them to see that they can live the abundant life starting in their homes and with their closest relationships. From authenticity in our closest relationships, ministry to those outside the family, to the community, and beyond, flows.