

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PROCESS

1. Who initiated the succession process and when did it start?

In 2015, Pastor Rob initiated a succession conversation with the Elders. In 2016, the Elder Board created a three phase Succession Plan and they have been executing that plan over the last four years.

2. Why haven't we heard about this earlier?

The process of replacing a senior pastor, who has served longer than any other pastor at WBC, is unprecedented in our church's history. When the process began, the Bughs needed time to pray and process and so did WBC leadership. We wanted to move with thoughtfulness and due diligence; neither too fast nor too slow. We decided to wait until we had a timeline from Rob and felt this would be the most effective way to help manage and guide the emotional, spiritual, and structural journey of this succession.

3. What is the process for finding our next Senior Pastor?

Per the WBC constitution, the Board of Elders will appoint a search committee. The search committee will make a recommendation to the Elders, who will make a recommendation to the Church. Members of the Church will vote by written ballot on the Senior Pastor Candidate recommended by the Elders. This vote requires a quorum (10% of the membership) and an affirmative vote of 75 percent or more to extend a call to the Senior Pastor Candidate. Absentee ballots will be available but do not count toward the fulfillment of a quorum.

4. What is the timeline for the transition?

We plan to launch the search committee in late April/early May. An executive search firm would be engaged, and the formal process would begin. Ideally, the Board of Elders would select a Senior Pastor Candidate during Q1 of 2021 and the church would vote on the Senior Pastor Candidate in Q2 of 2021. We would celebrate Rob and Rhonda's ministry in Q2 of 2021 and install the new Senior Pastor in Q3 of 2021. This would allow for a good transition.

If we don't have a new senior pastor in 12-15 months, our plan is to utilize some of our other pastors as well as guest speakers to preach on Sunday mornings.

5. How will this change affect current staff?

It will affect each staff person differently. A care plan will be developed that will address this significant transition and some Elders and staff will be assigned responsibilities as part of this plan. We also believe members of the church family will care for staff whom they know. It is normal for there to be some possible staff transitions when a senior pastor leaves and a new one comes on board. This is a natural part of a senior pastor transition. Some staff transitions would happen without a change in leadership.

6. How will the congregation be involved in the search and selection process?

The Elders will be conducting Focus Groups, will be visiting Adult Communities, and will be available to listen to your input. You can talk with an Elder face-to-face, by phone, or via email. We will also continue to hold "Ask Us Anything" meetings that we began last November. We do

sincerely wish to receive your candid input. The most important and impactful thing you can do is to pray, pray, pray.

Anyone in the congregation who regularly attends WBC and has a vested interest in our church can be involved in a Focus Group, which will help identify the criteria desired in the next Senior Pastor. Church members are eligible to serve on the search committee (see section below). Church members are allowed to vote on the Senior Pastor Candidate. If you are not a church member and want to have a vote, you will need to sign up for a [membership class](#) and go through the membership process.

7. What is a Focus Group?

Focus Groups are meetings we will hold for key volunteers and regular attenders to give input and work toward alignment on qualities and characteristics of our new Senior Pastor. Sign up for our [weekly newsletter](#) and watch for forthcoming dates if you're interested in participating in this part of the process.

8. What is Rob's role in the process?

As Rob stated, he will not pick his successor. He went on to say, "That is not my role per the constitution of WBC. Rather, it is the responsibility of the leadership and membership of WBC. I will not be involved in the search process. The members of WBC are the ones who have the responsibility to vote on our next Senior Pastor. We must all remember that the most important name in this church is Jesus Christ. He is the head of WBC, not me. He will lead us, He will guide. He loves this church. But His is the only Name that matters."

9. Will Pastor Rob overlap with the new Senior Pastor?

The plan is to have some overlap of Pastor Rob with the Senior Pastor Elect. The duration of this will be dependent upon several factors, including the hire date of our new Senior Pastor. We believe that, if possible, a two-month overlap would be optimal.

10. What is expected of me, as a member or regular attender of WBC, during this transition process?

We trust that you will:

- (a) take personal ownership of maintaining unity of our body;*
- (b) express to the Elder Board your input in a spirit of love;*
- (c) commit to pray individually and corporately that we will discover and embrace God's provision for our next Senior Pastor; and*
- (d) give generously to enable us to continue to pursue our mission and be in a strong financial position prior to the arrival of our next Senior Pastor.*

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE SEARCH COMMITTEE

1. How will the search committee be formed?

The search committee will be formed by the Board of Elders. Nominations are being received through March 31. The nominee must be a member of the church and be available to give extensive time to the search process during 2020 and perhaps into 2021.

2. Who will be on the search committee?

The search committee will be made up of members of the church. The Elders desire to have a good cross-section of the congregation represented. The Elders have elected Elder Jim Goetz to serve as Chairman of the Search Committee. John Walker, Elder Board Chairman, and Scott Landon, Executive Pastor of Administration, will serve as non-voting, ex officio members.

3. What are the characteristics and commitments for a member of the search committee?

Personal characteristics:

- 1. Holds to the mission, vision, and values of WBC as evidenced in their leadership and actions.*
- 2. Gives evidence of holding the best interests of WBC in the future regardless of their personal preferences, gifted in building harmony and unity in the body.*
- 3. Is optimistic about what God will do in the future of WBC and those possibilities more than the past of WBC.*
- 4. Is seen as a leader in their circle of influence at WBC, reaching the church's rich mix of ministries, backgrounds, age, gender, ethnicities, and giftedness.*

Committed to:

- 1. Praying daily for God's will and wisdom in the process, for themselves, for the committee, for the church and for the candidates.*
- 2. Developing and supporting the search specification.*
- 3. Attending biweekly meetings by phone or in person.*
- 4. Identifying and interviewing candidates.*
- 5. Communicating with and on behalf of their body of believers.*
- 6. Selecting and then supporting God's provision for our next Senior Pastor, including ongoing prayer, assistance in transition, and personal support (e.g. Have the pastor to your house for dinner!).*

4. Can we nominate someone for the search committee?

Yes, members may nominate other members by submitting an email to dstone@wheatonbible.org or by filling out the form available at the Welcome Desk in the atrium.

5. Will current pastors be considered for the position?

Yes, the plan is to conduct a search that will include both internal and external candidates.

6. Will we be using a search firm?

Yes, we plan to use an executive search firm that has extensive experience in serving large evangelical churches. It has been over 25 years since we've hired a senior pastor. The firm brings their experience and best practices along with an objective set of eyes to the executive search

process, finding candidates that we wouldn't find on our own. We believe this will be the best process to cast the net wide in considering who God would have serve as our next Senior Pastor.

Retaining a search firm means that firm would work exclusively for us to assess both internal and external candidates. The search firm will develop a keen understanding of our search criteria through discussions with the Search Committee and Elders. The firm will identify potential candidates from their extensive database and networks as well as names submitted by the Search Committee. They will evaluate candidates for their strengths and weaknesses as well as overall fit. They will be involved by listening to sermons, performing social media checks, reviewing websites, and interviewing the candidates (and, if married, their wives). They will then present candidates to the Search Committee for deeper consideration.

If you know of a potential candidate for Senior Pastor, you are encouraged to submit that name directly to the search committee by emailing dstone@wheatonbible.org.

7. Who decides on criteria for the search?

The Board of Elders and Senior Leadership Team have already been through a process of identifying some criteria. We will be holding several focus group meetings to allow others to provide input. From this, the criteria will be developed, and the pastor profile will be reviewed and approved by the Elders.

8. When and how will I have a chance to give input?

We will be posting Focus Groups dates and times where you will have an opportunity to provide input.

9. When and how do I get to vote on the next Senior Pastor?

Only church members will have a vote on the next Senior Pastor. If you are not a member and want to have a vote, you will need to sign up for a [membership class](#) and go through the membership process. The vote will happen after the Board of Elders has a Senior Pastor Candidate to recommend to the Church.

10. How can I/we pray for this process?

Succession planning is spiritual work. Prayer is central as is staying in God's Word. In the words of Pastor Rob, "The most important thing you can do is pray, pray that God by His Spirit will do incredible things here at WBC, that this will be a unifying process and that God will make his will clear about who he has chosen to be the next Senior Pastor."

The first church-wide prayer time will be on Wednesday night, March 25 at 7:00pm. Please join us. A variety of additional prayer times are being planned and will be communicated. You are also encouraged to pray in your Life Group, Adult Community, with others, as well as individually for this significant matter. Be looking for more details in the future.

11. How often will communication updates be provided by the Elders and where can I go for them?

We plan to communicate approximately every month or so in worship services, via email, on our website, and by other means.

12. How can I address questions or concerns I have during the process?

You can submit your questions or concerns to one of our Elders, a member of the search committee, or email dstone@wheatonbible.org and it will be given to the Search Committee.

QUESTIONS ABOUT PASTOR ROB

1. How long has Rob been the Senior Pastor at Wheaton Bible Church?

Rob started serving as Senior Pastor in September 1994. In September 2019, we celebrated his 25th anniversary at WBC.

2. Why is Rob retiring as Senior Pastor of WBC?

God began stirring in Rob's heart in 2015. After extensive time in prayer over several years, God repeatedly confirmed to Rob that it was time to retire from being the Senior Pastor of WBC. This is his decision based on his own initiative and the leading of the Holy Spirit. It is what led to succession planning that Rob and the Elders have been working on for the past four years.

3. Will Rob and Rhonda continue attending WBC after retirement?

No. While they love this church (Rob has been here 25 years and Rhonda has been here 32 years), have spent the bulk of their adult lives here, have raised their children here, and have grieved the loss of their first spouses here, they believe God is leading them to relocate.

4. What do Rob and Rhonda plan to do after Rob retires from WBC?

While Rob is retiring from WBC, he will not be retiring from ministry. He will transition to a part-time, global missions role with Greater Europe Mission, where he has been chairman of the board for the last 12 years. Rhonda plans to continue to work as a part-time pediatrician.

5. What will Rob do in his remaining time at WBC?

Rob will continue in his ministry of the Word by preaching. He will continue providing strategic leadership of the church, providing theological depth, and helping develop the next generation of leaders. He will continue to be accountable to the Board of Elders.

6. Why did Rob say a date range of 12-15 months as to when will he retire from WBC?

Succession is the intentional transfer of power, leadership, and authority from one primary leader to another. Rob has been the longest serving Senior Pastor in the history of Wheaton Bible Church. This succession is an intentional plan and one that we are undertaking together. Succession is an emotional journey for all involved, especially with a 25-year pastorate. The myth is that it is a structural decision mostly replacing one leader with another. This is rarely the case. Instead it is a matter of helping the current pastor, his spouse, the key staff, the Elder Board, the bulk of lay leaders in other roles, and the congregation towards an encouraging future. This 12-15 month period allows for a good process that acknowledges the spiritual, emotional, procedural, and structural sides of the process.