

THIRD ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SEARCH AND CALL COMMITTEE

November 15, 2024

To say that we are surprised to be making our third annual report to our Congregation would not be that much of a stretch. When we started this journey in July, 2022, we certainly hoped to have found a settled pastor by now but, unfortunately, like with many journeys we could not anticipate some of the obstacles and detours we would encounter. Although we have been interviewing candidates, none of them turned out to be the answer to our quest. Unfortunately, the profiles from each of our denominations have virtually ceased for the time being, which makes our job difficult.

We are pleased that we have been able to make a temporary arrangement with Rev. Devon Herrell to act as our Ministry Team Leader on a part-time basis. Pastor Herrell offered to assist us in this way to provide some stability as we continue our search. She is not only providing pulpit supply, but is also providing a book study, pub technology, wellness visits, and some limited office hours. We are mindful that she has a full-time job and are trying to utilize this wonderful resource without causing her undue stress.

We were very sorry to lose Carolyn Chipman, who resigned to deal with family issues. We appreciated her dedicated service and miss her valuable input. We feel very fortunate to have Kurt Somsel as a Committee member since he was also a member of the last Search Committee and is able to provide invaluable guidance. We are also grateful for our technocrat, Amy Buse, who is able to not only arrange for virtual meetings when that is necessary, but has also created a computer file where we are able to work remotely on our profiles. Our other talented members, Chaplain Peter McHugh and Clerk/Organizer Kerri Cook Rouech, bring their invaluable gifts as well.

We are hopeful that we will again receive candidate profiles from both of our denominations. As we do, we will continue to prayerfully consider how each might be the person who will fill our needs. We continue to be optimistic that the right pastor is out there and waiting to be matched with our Church. As we continue our journey, we ask for your continued prayers and support. Our committee continues to be grateful for this opportunity to serve the United Church of Big Rapids as we seek a new Pastor to lead us into the future. As always, we will look to Micah 6 for our inspiration to: "Do justice; Love Kindness; and, Walk Humbly with God."

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan H Grant, Chair Search and Call Committee

MEMBERS: Amy Buse; Peter McHugh, Chaplain; Kerri Cook Rouech; and Kurt Somsel