



Announcement

A special congregational meeting of the First Baptist Church & Society of Rochester will be held immediately after the service on Sunday, October 2, 2002 (at approximately 11am). The purpose of this meeting is for the congregation to vote on calling the Rev. Joanne Gilbert-Cannon as the church's next Senior Pastor. Members can participate in person or by Zoom.

Background & Process

In January of this year, Pastor Brent Bowden announced that he and Anna would be leaving the area as Anna pursued an exciting professional opportunity. As such, the church would be without a Senior Pastor come the end of July.

In February, the Church Council commenced discussing the search process, search objectives, search pace, and the necessity for an intentional interim. The Executive Minister for the Region was consulted and provided input. The outcome of these discussions led to a presentation to the congregation in March where the Council expressed its intention to commence an accelerated search process (without an intentional interim process) for three key reasons:

- Not having a senior pastor would likely create a sense of pause or paralysis in the church. In many respects, the church had been on "pause" for two years as it reacted to the pandemic. There had also been a significant "pause" during the multi-year interim between the retirement of Rev. Ken Williams and calling of Rev. Brent Bowden. With COVID hopefully subsiding, the Council was interested in finding and installing our next church leader as quickly as realistically possible to get our operations back to "normal" as soon as possible.
- It had been less than a year since a new Associate Pastor position was filled. It would be beneficial for our Associate Pastor to have a permanent Senior Pastor in place who could provide consistent guidance and mentoring.
- It would be beneficial for our church staff to have a Senior Pastor in place sooner than later to provide leadership, guidance, and manage expectations and roles.

After receiving positive feedback from the congregation, the Council commenced the process to appoint a Senior Pastor Search Committee. A month later, the congregation approved the formation of a Search Committee during a special congregational meeting and tasked the group with finding our next church leader. Over the next number of months, the search committee developed a job description and job postings, solicited interest via a variety of mechanisms, and ultimately vetted 18 candidates that expressed interest from all over the country.

On Sunday, August 21st, the search committee announced that they had found an exceptional candidate who was not only extremely qualified but was a longtime friend of First Baptist – Rochester and known to many in the congregation. The committee announced that pending approval via a congregational vote, the Rev. Joanne Gilbert-Cannon had agreed to serve as the next Senior Pastor and church leader.

Candidate Weekend Schedule

The church will be sharing information about Rev. Gilbert-Cannon via email during the month of September culminating with a candidate weekend on October 1st and 2nd. The schedule for the weekend includes:

- Saturday, October 1, 3:30pm to 5:00pm (in-person meet and greet reception at the church)
- Saturday, October 1, 6:30pm to 7:30pm (remote meet and greet session via church Zoom)
- Sunday, October 2, 10:00am (Rev. Gilbert-Cannon preaches during the morning service)
- Sunday, October 2, approx. 11:00am (special congregational meeting to vote on calling Rev. Gilbert-Cannon as Senior Pastor)

If the congregation votes to affirm the call of Rev. Gilbert-Cannon, she will officially commence the position on Monday, October 24th.