



First Baptist Church North Indianapolis

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18 January 98

Memorandum

To: The First Baptist Congregation
From: Tim Bratton - Chairman *TJB*
Re: Pulpit Committee Update

Pulpit Committee

Chairman

Timothy Bratton

Members

Clara Biven
Owen Cheatham
Ernestine Davis
J.C. Davis
Eddie Hall
Linda Jones
Donna McCray
Barbara Oyewo
Joseph Slash
Marshall Taylor
Melanie Tolbert
Earl White

Alternates

William Barnett
M. Elizabeth Ellison
Robert Wilson

Praise the Lord everybody ! I praise GOD upon my every remembrance of each of you. The Bible tells us that in all our getting, get an understanding. This is one of the reasons I stand before you this morning.

The Pulpit Committee has been working diligently using the process that was presented to you back in May. I know it must seem to some like, "What is the Pulpit Committee waiting for?" or "What is taking them so long for us to hear somebody preach." Well, these are viable questions that can be answered.

The 13 members and 3 alternates of the Pulpit Committee set a date of December 1st as a cut-off for receiving resumes and vitas. We received a total of 71 applications/resumes from 17 different states and Indiana. It really and truly takes time to examine and consider each of these resumes. I invited the Committee members to read more than once, each and every one of the resumes received. Some of them were one pagers and many were "page after page." In order for each member to prayerfully consider each resume, we first had to pray earnestly to GOD and ask Him to open our hearts and eyes to be receptive to each Man of God who submitted his materials. This is serious business.

The Pulpit Committee decided early on that it would narrow the prospect list to 3 finalists, 2 alternates and 3 "maybes". It was most imperative that the multitudinous gathering of resumes be trimmed.

The receipt of these materials has been a job in itself. Some of the Ministers submitted, almost immediately after Rev. Bradley announced that he -

- would retire. We actually received some as early as April and then on the other hand, we received some on the deadline of December 1, 1997. Upon receipt of each resume, a hand typed letter went out, back to the Minister, acknowledging that we had received his materials.

After deliberation and prayerful consideration, the Executive Comm. of the Pulpit Committee has narrowed the prospect list to 3 finalists and 2 alternates.

We, as a congregation will hear the 3 finalists on various weekends. I heard somebody just whisper..."but when?" Well, I say soon.

There are certain things that we must complete at this juncture. We, as a people have a proclivity to want to hear somebody preach, right now...this just can't happen. Realizing that some people look good on paper, but don't measure up when it comes down to the "real deal", we must move from paper to people.

We have made contact with these Men of God and are presently waiting to hear from each of them. I have requested certain entities from each of them to help us determine if they are equally yoked with the First Baptist Church Family...even in these premiere periods of "real" communication.

We must check references, verify degrees from the Universities, receive completed health checks, just to name a few things. After our initial checks into these 3 candidates, we shall go to hear them in person, unannounced. After that time, if all is in place concerning the candidate, we will bring the Minister and his wife in for a candidating weekend.

What is a candidating weekend? A candidating weekend is a time when we bring the candidate and his wife (1st Ladies are crucial to the Ministry and the success of the Pastor and church), we will show him our facilities, have lunch, take a brief tour of the city and then YOU will meet he and his wife at an informal reception here at the church on that Saturday evening. He then will retire and we will hear the Word of GOD from him during the regular Sunday morning corporate worship hour. We shall complete this process for each of the 3 finalists after the interview on the Saturday morning with the full Pulpit Committee. After the last checks are absolved by the Private Investigator, (who will search out various venues for us including criminal history), we will ask for the "vote" from you, the congregation.

We will then prepare for the wedding between Pastor and Church.

At that time, many of you will be asked to do various tasks -

- as it relates to the safe arrival and ease of transition, etc. for the new Shepherd and his family....whether it is from across the city or across the country.

We truly want this marriage to work, and it will if we seek His face, and if we are in alignment with the Word of GOD and if we stay prayed up !

So, here we are, right now, church.....we are waiting to receive secondary items from the ministers.

We will verify and check, and re-check them, using the criteria set up. We will visit one minister and then bring him in for you to meet and for you to hear. We'll do this for each. You, of course will be notified as to when the "candidating weekends" shall occur.

We want the right man, the first time....we don't want confusion as to who "he really is" - if you know what I mean.

There are so many scenarios that could happen without careful and articulate checkpoints. We've seen it happen too often, with some of our sister churches.

It takes more than a nice suit, fancy robe, a Cadillac and a "hoop" to be a Pastor. We want a saved preacher, who can preach, who is compassionate, senior-oriented, youth-oriented, people-oriented, missionary minded, intelligent and serious about this Christian walk.....a Man of the Cloth to lead us to Heaven. Preach to us, teach us, hold our hands, pray for us, bury us, marry us and simply be the visionary leader that the church sitting on the corner of 28th and Annette needs especially now, at the onset of a new millennium.

There is such a man ! GOD has already chosen him; and part of our Christian duties, part of our work, part of our continuing journey is to seek him out.

Won't you continue to pray for the Pulpit Committee, the Official Board, all Auxilliary leaders, and the entire church as we head into this "exciting" time in the life of our beloved 113 year old First Baptist North. If we are expecting excellence, we must present it !

How can we hear without a preacher, and how can he preach except he be sent ?

"ALL PRAISES TO GOD"