



June 20, 2018

SEARCH AND CALL FOR A MINISTER IS A SACRED WORK

Ministry with youth and children and their families is a fundamental value of our congregation and of my own vision for the Hills Church. That's why the completion of a successful search for a settled minister for youth and families is a priority of congregational leadership. That's why this is sacred work.

As things quiet down for summer, the search and call committee has invited three candidates for further interviews and visits after promising initial interviews. I can tell that each of them is a gifted minister. The real question is finding the right fit between a minister and the church's strengths, challenges, and hopes.

Over the winter and spring, the search committee and I conducted multiple interviews and visits with two ministers who had been selected from a larger group of candidates. At the end of the process, however, neither candidate ended up being the right fit for this church and this position. Since then, new doors have opened. In the space of a few weeks, a number of ministers reached transition points in their lives and stepped forward with interest in our church. The timing hadn't been right a few months ago, but it is now, and the next weeks are full of interviews and visits. In addition to meeting with the search committee, candidates also meet with myself, Sally Tomasetti, Cynthia Gordan, and Judy Swahnberg.

The co-chairs Josh Waetzig and Mimi D'Angelo lead a group that includes three parents of current children and youth, three parents whose children have grown up in the church and are now college-age and older, and one member in his early 30's who brings his own meaningful experience of youth ministry in this church. I have witnessed this group's enthusiasm and commitment to calling a minister who will bring great gifts and dedication to our ministry with young people.

We have all spent much time in dialogue with our church community, and your feedback has been very helpful. I am excited about the future of youth and family ministry at the Hills Church, and I look forward to more conversations about your specific hopes and dreams for the years ahead.

This congregation has many gifts to share with our youth and children, and they have many gifts to share with us and with the world. I trust that God holds our future, and I am full of hope.

I'll see you in church!

Peace,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Matt". The signature is stylized with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Rev. Dr. Matthew Wooster
Senior Minister