

April 15, 2008

Dear St. John's Members:

In December 2007, the church approved the recommendations of the Alternative Worship Independent Study Committee. One of those recommendations was that the Chair of Deacons appoint a committee to select and contract with a consultant to survey the whole church organization, to determine the best strategies to ensure that St. John's becomes and continues to be a healthy, vibrant church presenting an authentic Christian witness at East Fifth and Hawthorne.

Chairman Hank Packman appointed David Allen, Leslie Bragg, Lynn Pope, Ellen Smith, and Sally Young to this committee. We began our work in February and created a list of church consultants which we discussed with a number of prominent Baptist leaders throughout North Carolina. Two names quickly emerged as frontrunners. We interviewed both in early March and asked each to submit a proposal. Based on our interviews and these proposals, we unanimously agreed that Dave Odom is an excellent fit and has the skills we need.

Dave is currently director of Christian leadership at Duke Divinity School, a position he accepted last September after being executive director of the Center for Congregational Health at Wake Forest for a number of years. He is an ordained Baptist minister with extensive experience in assisting churches dealing with a variety of issues.

At their meeting on Monday evening, we presented our recommendation to hire Dave to the Deacons. There was much thoughtful discussion, leading to a unanimous approval of the recommendation to contract with Dave. We plan to begin the process in early May.

Our committee will act as liaison between Dave and the congregation. He will work with us to develop a process to involve the staff and the entire congregation in identifying our strengths, issues we want to work on, and initiatives to move us forward for the next three to five years. We anticipate this process will take about a year. He envisions the outcomes to include:

- Statements of mission and values that articulate the identity and work of the church and form the basis of ministry.
- Leadership structure for lay and clergy that channels energy towards the mission of the church.
- Initiatives that articulate key directions for the church over the next 3-5 years and a process by which those initiatives will be translated into specific actions.

The cost of our contract with Dave will be \$18,000. With the permission of the Finance Committee, we ask those who would like to contribute to this cost to send a check to Carolyn in the Business Office, designating the funds to this effort.

We found Dave to be thoughtful, articulate, and wise. We like him and think you will also. He will lead us on a journey that may sometimes be difficult but will also be exhilarating and ultimately fruitful for us all.

With love and hope in Christ,

David Allen, Leslie Bragg, Lynn Pope, Ellen Smith, Sally Young