

Greetings!

Hello, Burns Church! Let me introduce myself, my name is Kevin Lee, I am the new “Interim Moderator” of Burns Presbyterian appointed by the Presbytery of Pickering. For those of you who are new to the Presbyterian World, the fancy title just means that I am the “temporary Pastor” of the Burns Church until we find our new Pastor.

I just wanted to write a brief update so that you will know what we are doing in the coming days. My first and primary job is to work with the “Session Members” to ensure that life of the congregation goes on without a full time pastor. I will be trying to arrange for speakers to come every week who will faithfully preach God’s word and address any pastoral issues that may come up. In the Presbyterian churches, the elders have the spiritual responsibility of pastoring the congregation and its members. I know that the elders will do a great job!

Let me just briefly describe for you the steps we will be taking to find our new servant leader;

Step 1: Finding the Chair of the Search Committee

The Session has been given directions to pray and come up with names of people who will head up a team of people who will begin the process of finding the new Pastor. Once a Chairperson has been found, we will begin to form a team known as the search committee. The committee members will represent broad spectrum of people from the congregation. We are praying that this team will be formed by the end of October and begin its work starting in November.

Step 2: Compiling the Congregational Profile

Before the congregation can solicit profiles and resumes from candidates, the congregation needs to do some important internal work. One of the duties of the Search committee is to work with the Session to put together a “Congregational Profile”, which describes the congregational status as well as describes the candidate they are praying for. This profile involves statistical information, as well as, vision statements which describes where they are going. This requires the participation of all its members and adherents – question sheets will need be filled out, town hall meetings will be held to hear from members where they would like to see the congregation be in the future, and detailed statistical information needs to be compiled. We expect this process to take place during the months of November through January.

Step 3: Registering the Congregational Profile with Church Vocations Office and the Search Begins

Once the congregational profile has been put together, we can register our search for the new pastor with the head offices of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. Once that has been done we can advertise across the country about our search and begin receiving profiles from candidates who wishes to discern a call to Burns church (and let me add, who would want to come to Burns!). There are three groups of people who are qualified to be considered for the call. The **First group** of people are people Graduating from the three theological colleges (St. Andrew’s- Vancouver, Knox – Toronto, Presbyterian College – Montreal) who have been “Certified as Candidate for Ordination” by their Presbyteries. The graduating

candidates must be in their final term of their studies and they must be given permission to speak to the congregation by the Colleges, usually, such permissions are given in October and in February. The **second group** of candidates are ministers currently ministering in the congregations belong to the Presbyterian Church in Canada. The **third group** of people are candidates ordained in other denominations who have been received as candidates within the Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Step 4: Interviews

Once the resumes and profiles of candidates are received, the search committee can begin the work of ranking the candidates and begin the interview process. If a candidate is currently serving a congregation, we may want to visit the congregation to see the candidate preach and lead worship. If a candidate is far away, we may ask for recordings of their sermons and interview through a conference call. The usual practice is for the search committee to recommend just one candidate to the Session for their review and if satisfied, that person will be invited to “preach for the call”. The congregation has the opportunity at this time to either sign the call and endorse the candidate or not sign the call to reject the candidate. A Strong majority (90% or higher) of accepting the candidate is usually required for the call to go through.

Step 5: Presbyteries Approval

Once the candidate has preached for the call with strong agreement by the congregation that He or She is the right candidate to lead our church, we bring our decision to the Presbytery for their approval. The notification of the call will also be sent to the Presbytery of the candidate and their recognition of the call is sought. Once the call has been received, dates are set for the Ordination/Induction service and the date for the commencement of the ministry will be established.

This is a “brief” summary of the steps we will undertake in the next several weeks as we seek the face of God for Burns. The first step we need to take is to come together on the Anniversary Sunday, on October 18 and begin talking, praying, and sharing our dreams for Burns Church. I invite one and all to the service, followed by Lunch and a “Town Hall Meeting” to share our dreams with one another. See you then!

In Christ,

Rev. Kevin Lee

Interim Moderator of Burns Presbyterian Church