Plymouth Q & A Re: Resignation of Senior Minister Rev. Dr. Matt Mardi-LeCroy
July 21, 2020

Q: Why is Matt leaving?

A: Matt has explained in his letter of resignation that he made this decision after much prayer and deep conversation with those close to him—that he is stepping away to meet new challenges, to focus on his own calling (see his full letter to the Church). He has been a member of the Plymouth family for 15 years and made enormous contributions to the life of this church. We are deeply grateful for all he has helped to accomplish and for the way he has led us to grow in love of God and neighbor. We respect his desire to listen more fully to what God intends for his future.

Q. Why so sudden?

A. It may seem sudden with a relatively short time from announcement to Matt’s service of leaving in a few weeks. However, Matt and our lay leaders have been discussing this decision on Matt’s part since June. Since then, we have been working on planning: for Council and all-Church meetings, to begin the process of interim minister planning, and other work streams.

Q: Given all that Matt’s done for Plymouth, how will we celebrate his ministry and wish him well in his future endeavors?

A: A special service of leaving will be held on Sunday, August 2nd. If you wish to send a personal note, please do that at his home address at 6604 Colby Ave Windsor Heights, IA 50324 or via email at mmardis-lecroy@plymouthchurch.com through August 2; at mardislecroy@gmail.com thereafter.

Q: What happens next?

A: Day-to-day ministry, operations and activities will continue to be led by our very capable team of LeAnn, Lindsey, Chris, Emily, Mary Kate, and Rushing, along with the rest of Plymouth’s staff. At the same time, we are working to bring on an interim senior minister to help until such time as we can call a new senior minister.

Q: How do we choose a new Senior Minister?

A: Our Church Bylaws specify the process for choosing a Senior Minister. With leadership from the Deacons and input from our Boards, a search committee will be formed. We expect this to be a very deliberate and thorough process that will take some time; but work on this will begin in the coming weeks.
Q: When will the search committee begin its work?

A: The search committee will determine a timeline once it is formed and appropriately keep the church informed along the way.

Q: What happens until a new Senior Minister starts?

A: The Moderator, David Johnson, and Moderator-elect, Jodi Gruening, have been in contact with the UCC Regional leadership to discuss next steps. Most immediately, that means hiring an interim senior minister to enable us the time and space to conduct a proper senior minister search, and enable us to maintain momentum. We expect to move quickly, but thoroughly and thoughtfully. To that end, former moderators Beth Stelle-Jones, Dave Everett, and Steve Jacobs, with input from Sally Pederson—and our church staff and the UCC conference—are assisting with this work.

Q. How will we be kept informed?

A. Clear and consistent communication is a top priority. Look to the new website for a dedicated landing page to be launched soon updating news about the search in addition to information in the weekly email blasts, and the monthly Contact.

Q: What about the Saturday Night Band? Is Mary Beth leaving too?

A: Mary Beth will continue in her role as the Saturday Night Band leader.

Q. When will we know what’s in the strategic plan? What about the new By-Laws draft?

A. We have two groups of Plymouth lay leaders working hard on drafting a new strategic plan for our consideration (remember those Congregational Triad Conversations we had back in February) and a new set of by-laws (a Bylaws Committee appointed by the Church Council has been working since last summer) to help us govern ourselves as effectively as possible. Both workstreams are drawing closer to being ready to share their work and we will likely hear more in August and September.

Q. Will Matt’s leaving in August delay in-person worship?

A. No. We have a health and safety task force advising on when and how we will worship again in person following their recommendations; that group is chaired by Julie Carroll, Deacon, along with Dr. Rocky Morton, Dr. Priscilla Ruhe, Bill Wedeking, Cathy McMullin, Emily Pontius, Jodi Gruening, David Johnson, and staffed by LeAnn Stubbs, Emily Tripp, and Dan Olson.
Q. Who can I talk to if I have questions?

A. Questions concerning church governance should be directed to Moderator David Johnson at david.johnson@meredith.com or 515-240-5109, or Moderator-elect Jodi Gruening at Jodigruening@gmail.com or 515-240-1433. Questions about worship services should be directed to LeAnn Stubbs at lstubbs@plymouthchurch.com, or 515-491-4682. And questions regarding church operations and finance should be directed to Emily Tripp at etripp@plymouthchurch.com or 515-255-3149 x19.