

September 12, 2019

Dear Willow Elders,

It has been an honor to serve beside and with you these past several months. Our assignment is far from complete, but we wish to take this opportunity to provide an update for you as to the work Vanderbloemen has been doing on behalf of the Elders and Search Team.

We are grateful to partner with the Search Team and the amazing work they have been doing. We have the opportunity to walk alongside hundreds of churches and organizations each year, and rarely have we found a group of men and women so thoughtful, prayerful, and professional. They bring strong optimism and faith into the room, but also ask great questions and provide important accountability to the process as we work together in this important task.

We began our work with Willow on June 2, and began the public phase of our search on June 18. Here is a short summary of what has been happening...

- After posting the job on key websites, the job summary has seen more than 6,600 views. Although some visit the site more than once, we believe this indicates more than 6,000 people who have shown interest in the role.
- In networking efforts, our team has already invested scores of hours in more than 120 personal phone calls with pastors and leaders all over the world. This yielded nearly 40 qualified and competent candidates with very strong references. These conversations continue.
- Additionally, we have interacted with 126 individuals (to date) to vet them for the role of Senior Pastor at Willow. These candidates include men and women, multiple ethnicities, and locations both domestic and international.
- Many hours have been spent screening candidate sermons as well as other relevant credentials.

- With guidance from the Search Team and criteria they provided, the top candidates were personally interviewed by William Vanderbloemen and/or myself.
- From those finalists, we selected and presented the top six candidates to the Search Team in mid-August.

Our work now includes coaching the Search Team as they engage with the candidates, conduct interviews, and ask important questions to assess the cultural fit and competency of each of these finalists. We also continue to network all around the world to surface other viable candidates.

We are convinced that the Holy Spirit is in charge of this search, and in control of it. We are also certain that the Holy Spirit uses the prayers of God's people as the backbone of any search. Please pray for us and for the Search Team as we continue this journey with you. And rest assured, we have taken this journey with many, many churches, non-profits, and faith-based organizations all over the world. As our team has been praying for Willow, we have also felt your prayers for our team. Although the work is not yet complete, the Search Team is moving purposely and prayerfully as they consider each candidate.

In summary, the search is right on schedule. We have great trust and confidence in the leadership of the Search Team, and we will continue to work with them until Willow Creek has a new senior pastor.

In His Steps,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim Stevens". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the last name.

Tim Stevens  
Vice President of Consulting