

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS 1:

Senior Pastor Succession

1. How did this conversation begin?

Pastor Chuck has been praying about succession almost since stepping into the Senior Pastor role 11 years ago. Over time, he periodically discussed this with the Elder Board while waiting on God's timing. After returning from his sabbatical in November 2025, Pastor Chuck shared with the elders that he believed it was time to begin intentionally planning for succession. The elders affirmed this, as they had also been seeking the Lord's direction. This marked the beginning of a focused, prayerful season of discernment for what comes next.

2. When did the formal process begin?

Following Pastor Chuck's sabbatical in 2025, church leadership began asking how to thoughtfully prepare for the next season. We identified the need for a deliberate, prayer-driven process with a general timeframe of 18–24 months to ensure a healthy and effective transition.

3. How is the church approaching this transition?

From the beginning, we committed to doing this well. Rather than relying only on past experience, we have:

- Studied best practices in pastoral succession
- Reviewed church models and resources
- Engaged the full Elder Board early

This is a church-wide leadership commitment to pursue wisdom, unity, and God's direction throughout the process.

4. What were the first steps?

Recognizing that it has been over a decade since our last transition, the elders formed a Futures Team to help guide the early stages. This team:

- Learned from other churches in our district that have recently gone through transitions
- Sought wisdom from EFCA district leadership
- Helped determine a preferred "baton pass" approach rather than an interim season, if the Lord allows

5. What is the Futures Team?

The Futures Team was formed to help guide this process in a focused and intentional way.

- Members were selected based on experience and availability
- A formal charter was created and approved by the Elder Board

This group helps ensure the process remains aligned with our mission and is carried out with care and clarity.

6. Who is on the Futures Team?

- Larry Deans
- Jason Arndt
- Ross Bilello
- Bob Hiebeler
- Pastor Chuck

7. Did we learn from other churches?

Yes. We intentionally connected with churches currently navigating transitions, including Tomah Bible Church and Kenosha Bible Church, both EFCA churches. We also sought guidance from EFCA leadership. These conversations provided valuable insight and helped shape a thoughtful and informed approach.

8. Why are we using outside expertise?

We learned that churches who navigate transitions well often partner with experienced outside guidance. This is a complex and important process, and we want to steward it faithfully. Outside expertise helps:

- Provide clarity and structure
- Reduce potential risks
- Maintain leadership alignment
- Ensure a thorough and objective process

9. Who is NL Moore & Associates?

After significant research and prayer, we selected NL Moore & Associates to guide us. They bring nearly 20 years of experience in pastoral succession and have served many churches, including several in our district. We were drawn to:

- Their proven and thoughtful process
- Their alignment with our values
- Their heart for the local church and commitment to prayer

They have already begun praying for our church and this transition.

10. What will NL Moore & Associates help us do?

They will partner with us in key areas, including:

- Conducting a Church Health Assessment
- Facilitating Leadership Assessments
- Helping develop an Ideal Candidate Profile
- Assisting in the pastoral search process

11. Are we making decisions on our own?

While we are partnering with a consulting firm, the responsibility for discernment remains with our church leadership.

- The Elder Board will play a central role in decision-making
- A search team from our congregation will be formed to interview candidates
- The congregation will have a final vote

This ensures both strong leadership and meaningful congregational involvement.

12. What happens next?

Here are some key upcoming steps:

- **April 26** – Special Q&A session during the Equipping Hour
- **May 3–May 17** – Church-wide Health Assessment Survey
- **Following that** – Consultants will visit for a weekend of interviews and focus groups with elders, staff, and congregation

These steps will help develop a clear and prayerfully discerned profile for our next Senior Pastor.

13. Will the next Senior Pastor come from within or outside the church?

As we move forward, we will work with NL Moore & Associates to develop a clear role description and candidate profile. From there, we will discern whether to consider internal candidates, external candidates, or both—depending on how God leads.

14. What can the congregation expect during this process?

We want to reassure you that this process will be:

- Prayerful
- Intentional
- Transparent

We are committed to unity and to faithfully following God's leading every step of the way.

Our goal is not just a smooth transition, but long-term church health and increased mission impact.

15. What can I do as part of the church family?

We invite you to be actively involved through prayer:

- For this entire process
- For Pastor Chuck and Karen
- For church leadership and the search team
- For the future Senior Pastor and his family
- For unity

16. Who can I go to with questions?

You can go to any of the members on the Futures Team or you may email succession@calvarycommunity.net



The passing of the baton is in God's hands. By his grace, we will keep running this race together with faith, with unity, and with urgency, seeking to know and love Jesus more each day so that we can make him known... because the world needs Jesus.

Moses spoke to the Lord, saying, "Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the congregation who shall go out before them and come in before them, who shall lead them out and bring them in, that the congregation of the Lord may not be as sheep that have no shepherd."

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS 2:

Church Assessment Tool© (CAT)

The Church Assessment Tool (CAT) is a resource developed by Holy Cow! Consulting. For over 30 years, they've helped thousands of churches assess congregational health. NL Moore & Associates partners with them and will guide us through both the process and the results.

1. What is the Church Assessment Tool©?

The Church Assessment Tool© is an online survey that helps measure the health of our congregation. It normally includes 85 questions, but with a few added by our church, ours will have 103 total. It takes about 25–30 minutes to complete and produces a detailed report called *Vital Signs*©.

2. Why are we doing this?

Think of this as taking our church to a doctor, a travel agent, and a tailor all at once. It will help give our leaders a clear picture of our current health, where people sense God leading us, and what makes our church unique.

3. How will we use it?

We'll be using the results as part of our succession planning for Pastor Chuck. This will help us shape a clear and informed candidate profile for what comes next.

4. Why use a survey instead of just conversations?

We value conversations—but we also know we tend to hear from a smaller circle of people. This survey helps us hear from the whole church and gives us a broader, more accurate picture.

5. Is it confidential?

Yes. Responses are completely confidential. That means everyone can answer honestly, and every voice carries equal weight.

6. Isn't a survey too impersonal?

For many, it's actually the opposite. It gives people a chance to share thoughts they're not often asked about and to be heard in a meaningful way.

7. Can you really measure the health of a church?

We're asking people to reflect on their experience—things like purpose, relationships, and awareness of God at work. When those patterns emerge across the congregation, they give us a strong picture of our overall health.

8. What if I don't use a computer?

The survey can be taken on a phone, tablet, or computer. If needed, we'll provide a printed copy. You can return it, and a trusted staff member or volunteer will enter your responses. We're also happy to help anyone who would like assistance.

9. What makes this tool unique?

CAT has been used for over 30 years with thousands of churches. It's also flexible, which makes it especially helpful for us during this pastoral transition.

10. Who should take the survey?

We encourage all members and regular attenders (age 16+) who have been active in the past year to participate.

11. How will I access the survey?

We'll share a link and QR code through email and bulletin inserts.



12. How do you have my email address?

We use information from the church app. If you haven't added your information yet, you can do so here:

[Insert link]

13. When is the survey open?

The survey will be open from May 3–May 17, 2026. It's available 24/7 and should be completed in one sitting (about 25–30 minutes).

14. When will we see the results?

Church leaders will receive the results in early June. We'll walk through them in a guided two-hour debrief, and then we'll create opportunities to share key insights with the congregation.

- **Bottom line:**

This is an opportunity for everyone to be heard and to help shape the future of our church.



The passing of the baton is in God's hands. By his grace, we will keep running this race together with faith, with unity, and with urgency, seeking to know and love Jesus more each day so that we can make him known... because the world needs Jesus.

Moses spoke to the Lord, saying, "Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the congregation who shall go out before them and come in before them, who shall lead them out and bring them in, that the congregation of the Lord may not be as sheep that have no shepherd."

NUMBERS 27:15-17

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS 3:

Clarifying the Church Health Assessment

As part of our Senior Pastor transition, we've begun the CAT (Church Health Assessment). After the first week, we've received some great questions and wanted to take time to respond to them here.

If you have additional questions, feel free to email us at succession@calvarycommunity.net We'd love to hear from you.

1. I didn't get an email—what should I do?

Invitations were sent through our church database (Planning Center) using the contact info you've provided. A couple quick things to check:

- Take a look in your spam or junk folder
- Make sure we have your birth date on file (the survey is for ages 16+)
- If you share an email with someone in your household, only one invite may have been sent

2. Can I get the link another way?

Absolutely! Just email succession@calvarycommunity.net, and we'll send it your way. We're working to respond quickly, but please allow up to 24 hours.

3. What if I don't use a computer?

No problem at all. Paper copies are available:

- At the church office (just give us a call)
- At the welcome desk on the weekend

We do encourage online responses if possible, since paper copies require manual entry—but we're happy to make it work either way.

4. How many responses are you hoping for?

We'd love to hear from as many people as possible! Our goal is 320 responses, and we're off to a great start—150 came in during the first two days.

5. Why isn't there a place to leave comments?

Great question. The assessment itself is standardized, so it doesn't include comment sections.

That said, we really do want to hear your thoughts. Feel free to email succession@calvarycommunity.net or submit written feedback to the church office anytime.

6. Who is NL Moore & Associates?

They're the consulting group we've partnered with to guide this process. They've been helping churches with pastoral transitions for nearly 20 years. We chose them because of their experience, their thoughtful approach, and their heart for the local church. They've already been praying for Calvary during this season.

7. Who is Holy Cow! Consulting?

Holy Cow! Consulting (HCC) is the group who provides the survey tool itself. They don't work directly with our church in the decision-making process, they simply collect the responses. This is a tool NL Moore has trusted and used for 17 years because of how reliable and helpful it is.

8. Who actually interprets the results?

NL Moore does. Once the survey is complete, they take the data, analyze it, and walk our leadership through what it means. This information will then be shared with the congregation.

9. Is the survey grounded in Scripture or secular thinking?

The survey is only one tool among several that will be used. It is designed as a standardized research tool, meaning its language may feel different from explicitly theological or Scripture-based language. This is intentional to ensure statistical reliability and broad applicability. The survey does not replace biblical discernment, which is extremely important to us. The survey is not intended to define theology, only to provide insight into congregational health and perceptions.

10. How much weight does the survey carry?

The church health assessment is just one step in understanding our congregation.

After the survey, two consultants will spend time onsite meeting with our Senior Pastor, elders, staff, and members through interviews and focus groups. This allows them to hear directly from people who know and love our church.

They then combine what they learn from both the survey and these conversations to develop a clear picture of our church and what we're looking for in our next pastor.

From there, a profile of an ideal candidate is created. This profile is carefully reviewed, adjusted, and approved by our elders before any candidates are contacted. This ensures there is strong alignment and clarity within our leadership before moving into the search process and evaluating potential candidates.

11. Are we relying too much on outside consultants?

Not at all. This process does not replace prayer or biblical discernment—it supports it. Our church leaders remain fully responsible for seeking God's direction as we move forward.

12. What happened to the Futures Team?

The Futures Team has completed the work they were asked to do and has now been dissolved. We're grateful for the time and prayer they invested in this process. It may be revived at a later date for other decisions needing to be made about the future of the ministry.

13. What about the Search Team?

Our bylaws require a search team for this process. It will include:

- 3 elders
- At least 4 members from the congregation

The elders are currently praying over this team and the members to be invited. It is a significant role with a significant time commitment. More details will follow in future FAQs. If you have suggestions, you're welcome to send them to succession@calvarycommunity.net

You can also find earlier FAQs on our church website (calvarycommunity.net/succession) if you'd like to catch up on anything we've already covered.



The passing of the baton is in God's hands. By his grace, we will keep running this race together with faith, with unity, and with urgency, seeking to know and love Jesus more each day so that we can make him known... because the world needs Jesus.

Moses spoke to the Lord, saying, "Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the congregation who shall go out before them and come in before them, who shall lead them out and bring them in, that the congregation of the Lord may not be as sheep that have no shepherd."

NUMBERS 27:15-17