



336.723.1621

300 North Cherry Street
Winston Salem, NC 27101

www.1stPres.com

Dear Covenant Partners and Friends of First Pres,

As you know, Dr. Peter Barnes retired from our church at the end of 2021, and a Congregation Meeting was held on January 9 for the congregation to vote to concur with his request that the Presbytery dissolve the pastoral relationship between Peter and First Pres upon his retirement. We have been urged by the Presbytery to write to the covenant partners of our church to make them aware of the relational changes this will involve both for us and for Peter.

When a pastor leaves a call, there are bonds of affection between the pastor and covenant partners of the congregation that continue to be cherished. Friendships may continue, but the pastoral relationship does not. In order for the work of the congregation to prosper, when any pastor resigns from a pastorate or retires, that pastor should cease to perform pastoral functions at funerals, baptisms, and weddings, unless invited to officiate in such a capacity by the new pastor or the Session.

Ordinarily, the pastor will not participate in the life and worship of the church he or she is leaving for at least one year. Therefore, the pastor is encouraged to find another worshipping community for spiritual nourishment during this period of time. Individual members are asked not to place former pastors in the awkward position of asking their "friend" to perform the duties of a pastor. Instead, congregants are to work through the Transitional Pastor and then the new Senior Pastor when one is called. During this season of transition, the space offered gives both the congregation and the pastor time to work through the grief that always exists in a pastoral transition.

We continue to hold Peter and Cyndy in our prayers, and we know that they will be praying for us as well in this new season of their life together. If you have any questions about these matters, feel free to contact one of the elders on Session or one of our Associate Pastors.

Yours in the service of Christ,

The Personnel Committee