



Pastor Mike's Retirement: Questions & What's Next for Westminster

1. Why is Pastor Mike sharing this now?

Because trust matters. Pastor Mike and the Session believe that truth builds trust, and trust builds momentum. Sharing this information early allows the congregation to walk together, without surprises, through a thoughtful, prayerful season of preparation rather than reacting to change later.

2. Is Pastor Mike leaving immediately?

No. Pastor Mike plans to continue serving as senior pastor over the next six to seven months, with the intention of retiring in summer 2026. This timeline allows for stability, clear communication, and a smooth, Spirit-led transition.

3. Is this transition the result of a problem or conflict?

No. This is not a crisis. Westminster is healthy, united, and growing in ministry. Pastor Mike's decision comes from prayerful discernment and a shared desire with the Session to steward this season wisely while the church is strong.

4. What role will Pastor Mike play during the transition?

Pastor Mike will continue to preach, pastor, and lead faithfully. He will also actively support the Session and congregation as they prepare for the next chapter of leadership, helping ensure continuity, clarity, and peace throughout the process.

5. Why talk about a capital campaign at the same time as a pastoral transition?

Because they are part of the same story. Both the pastoral transition and the proposed facility improvements are about preparing Westminster for the future; for new leadership, expanded ministry, and the next generation of worshippers, learners, and servants. Addressing them together reflects honesty and confidence, not distraction or urgency.

6. Is the capital campaign connected to Pastor Mike's retirement?

No. The capital campaign is not funding the transition, nor is it driven by it. The campaign focuses on upgrading our facilities to align with the vitality of our mission. Pastor Mike has affirmed this vision as part of his commitment to Westminster's future, setting up the next pastor for success, unencumbered by these needs.

7. Has the Session already begun planning for a new pastor?

Yes. The Session has begun preparatory work to ensure a smooth and Spirit-led process. Westminster will partner with McGowan Global Institute (MGI) to facilitate a national pastoral search, grounded in prayer, transparency, and congregational involvement.

8. How will the congregation be involved in the search process?

The congregation will play an important role. A Pastor Search Committee (PSC) will be nominated and elected in early 2026. Regular updates will be shared so the church can pray, stay informed, and participate appropriately throughout the process.

9. What is the expected timeline for calling a new pastor?

While timelines can vary, the anticipated process runs from early 2026 through late 2026, with the hope of welcoming a new senior pastor in fall 2026. A clear timeline with milestones will be shared as the process unfolds.

10. Will ministry continue as normal during this season?

Yes. Westminster's ministries of worship, care, education, athletics, retirement living, and campus ministry will continue fully and faithfully. The goal of this season is continuity, not disruption.

11. How will communication be handled going forward?

Communication will be regular, transparent, and pastoral. Updates will come through:

- Sunday announcements
- Congregational emails
- Written updates from the Session
- Opportunities for questions and conversation

No major decisions will be made without clear communication.

12. How can I support Westminster during this season?

You can support the church by:

- Praying regularly for Pastor Mike, the Session, and the future pastor
- Remaining engaged in worship and ministry
- Listening with grace and speaking with unity
- Participating prayerfully as capital campaign and search details are shared

13. What should we remember most in this season?

Seasons of transition in the church are sacred. God has been faithful to Westminster in the past, and God is faithful now. This is a season to honor the past, steward the present, and prepare for the future, together.