

THE NAME NARROWING PROCESS SO FAR

As you consider the final five names proposed, it might be helpful to know what process we have walked through to arrive at this point. The elders recommended that we begin a name change process in November 2019 and received some initial feedback. We had a congregational meeting in January 2020 focused on a potential name change and have been getting more detailed and extensive feedback since then.

NAMESTORMING PHASE

January 2020 also began a timeframe for people to suggest potential names, as well as give feedback on the process. We also included an option to suggest a name through a paper feedback form and included a name suggestion card in the bulletin for two weeks in a row.

Through that namestorming process, our congregation suggested 119 names (we have previously said 123, but we realized that we counted a couple of names twice by accident). The creativity and participation in that process was really encouraging. Thank you to anyone who submitted a name.

NAME NARROWING PHASE

On February 9, we finished taking suggestions and then asked an initial group (Name Narrowing Team, Deacon Committee, Elders, and Staff) to score all 119 from 1-5, which helped us narrow the list down from 119 to a more reasonable number to discuss within the Name Narrowing Team.

On February 16, a team of 12 met to prayerfully discern a final five to be considered. The team was comprised of Mike Jones, Rick Swanson, Eleanore Allen, Dick Rasmussen, Jenny Deming, Jeff Schaper, Richard LaBorde, Rachael Jolivette, Jeremy Adelman, Carrie Paulson, Alex Baxley, and Dalton Nowicki.

As we narrowed the list of names down to five, we considered which names accurately reflect (1) our identity and vision as a church, (2) which names would be inviting and welcoming to our family, friends and neighbors, (3) which names were pleasing to the ear, and (4) whether there were other churches in town with the same or similar name.

Throughout that process, we believe that God's Spirit was leading us, and we arrived at five names in a unified way. It was not easy, and we all felt the weighty responsibility of the task. Thank you for those of you who have been praying up to this point, and for the team that met on February 16. Continue to pray that God would make it clear which name we should choose and that God would bring unity to our church around that name.

