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April 10, 2018

Dear Friends,

While we are saddened by Chandler's announcement, I'm confident that each of you will join me in wishing him God's richest blessings as he transitions into retirement. We've truly been blessed to do ministry together in this place and in these times.

As another chapter in Westminster's rich history draws to a close, we look ahead with hope and anticipation to the season God will call us to next. It will also be a time for remembering and celebrating Chandler's 10 years of ministry as our senior pastor and head of staff, as well as his 35-year career as a Minister of Word and Sacrament.

The Presbyterian Church (USA) Book of Order outlines the procedures for pastoral changes in our denomination's congregations. In the weeks leading up to and following Chandler's departure, the Personnel Committee, the Session, and the Presbytery of Lake Michigan will work through many of these steps. The congregational Nominating Committee will identify members for a Pastoral Nominating Committee, or PNC. The PNC's responsibility will be to find the person God is calling to join us as our next senior pastor and head of staff.

As you can imagine, it is difficult to predict a timetable for any search. Past experience has shown that we can expect approximately 18- 24 months. You can be confident the PNC will invite your input and provide regular updates. We ask for your patience and prayers.

Westminster's interim periods have historically been fruitful times for us as a church family. We should look at this time of transition as an opportunity for reflection, examination, and challenge for individual and corporate growth. It is a Holy time to receive the gifts of the Spirit. It's also important to remember we will continue to be fed and cared for by our very strong and loving staff—and certainly by each other. Please pray for our staff, your elected leadership, and the congregation.

As members or friends of Westminster, many of us may be asking, "What can I do during this transition?" Chandler has often shared his hope that Westminster may thrive and continue to be the face of God in and beyond our community. To that end, the best answer to our question is this: continue supporting the work of this church, attend worship, maintain financial support, stay involved, hold each other in the Light, and trust in God to lead us forward.

God bless you and God bless Chandler.

Together we serve,

Stephen W. Baron  
Elder for Personnel

P.S. – Save Saturday, May 5, for an evening of music and conversation with Chandler at Westminster. Our Celebration Sunday to honor his ministry is June 3, and he'll continue preaching through June 24.