

Dear Friends in the Lord:

After much prayer and deliberation, your Council has unanimously decided that our beloved church will continue regular Sunday services until Pastor Rich retires, then close our doors on June 30, 2019. Between now and then, let us celebrate and cherish our many years together as a congregation, and give thanks to God.

As you can all well imagine, the current church Council, and others before it, have spent many, many hours contemplating our Pastor's inevitable retirement, and where we go as a church after that retirement. These prayerful discussions began at least five years ago and have been a continuing topic in almost every Council meeting since.

Rich, and his inspiring sermons, have been the centerpiece of our congregation for its entire existence. I think we can all agree that this is still the case. It's fair to say that most of us-- maybe 100%--are here because we want to hear Rich preach!

As Council discussed our future, these were some of our main considerations:

(1) The demographics of our congregation. Let's face it, folks, we're all getting along in years! Our numbers have diminished in recent years, and when you consider the age, health, and general makeup of our congregation, that trend will probably continue -- and likely accelerate.

(2) The cost in time and money to find, and perhaps relocate, a new senior minister would be prohibitive, and Council is reflective of the congregation at large: there just isn't the time and energy to conduct such a process.

(3) Should any funds remain in the Church's accounts after all final expenses are paid, those funds will be allocated, in amounts to be determined by the Council, to CCOJ's four Missions: Coachella Valley Rescue Mission, Journey to Freedom, The Salvation Army and Young Life.

We plan to celebrate the life of our church--and Rich and Roy's retirement--with a couple of events in the coming months. *We will gather in recognition of Roy and Dorothy following worship on March 10, and then we will hold a dinner in recognition of Rich and Connie on Sunday, March 24.* Both gatherings will be paid for out of the church's budget. Please be sure to put these special events on your calendar.

We look forward to continuing the wonderful worship experiences we've shared all these years, even as we begin looking for other places to call our future church home.

Yours in Christ,

Council

