



A people of faith on the journey of life

Introducing Austin Almaguer From the Pastor Search Team

The Pastor Search Team is pleased to present an overview of our search and introduce the pastoral candidate who emerged from the process. Having received more than 200 resumes for the senior pastor position, we had many good candidates, making it difficult to choose among them. As we gradually narrowed the list – through Skype interviews, listening to sermons online, contacting references, and exploring church and seminary websites – we were left with ten candidates who stood out for us as a possible match for VBC.

Austin Almaguer was one of those ten who stayed on our top-choice list. Through our Skype interviews with him, we found him to be engaging, genuine, and extremely well-prepared for our questions. We liked him a lot! We began to hear, from members of the larger Baptist faith community, that Austin was one of the most promising young pastors in the country. We asked ourselves, “Would he want to come to VBC after being a Pastoral Resident in a much larger downtown church in Dallas?” But Austin continued to be interested in VBC, just as we were interested in him.

In working together for the past year and a half, the Search Team discovered that among the six of us, we hold many different viewpoints and considered that a strength. And so we anticipated and prepared for a difference of opinion when it came to selecting our top candidates. Remarkably, we agreed on the candidates to keep or let go, and even more remarkably, we ALL agreed that out of all the candidates, Austin Almaguer has the most potential and capacity for being the pastoral leader VBC needs at this time. This of course we realized was in fact not remarkable at all, as we felt strongly led by the Holy Spirit throughout this entire process. We acknowledged that it could not have happened the way it did without the Spirit's presence with us and work through us.

When several of us on the Team visited Austin at his church in Dallas, the sense of connection between us was striking for all present. From that weekend, as we experienced his pastoral presence and ability as a leader and preacher, and in the weeks ahead, when Austin visited with us in Vienna, we became clear about the decision to move forward with our recommendation of Austin Almaguer as our next pastor.

As we matched up Austin's qualifications and abilities to the VBC Pastor Profile and Position Description, we found that he not only met our requirements but far exceeded some.

continued





- He has a reputation for being a strong, innovative, and visionary leader.
- He is a gifted preacher who has a solid theological foundation.
- His faith is strong and sure, and his interpretations are relevant to our lives today.
- His pastoral care comes through in the intentional way he listens to everyone who speaks with him.
- He enjoys and connects with people and is excited about the potential of the VBC faith community for being God's presence in the world.

These are just some of Austin's outstanding qualities. As for the others, well, you will just have to get to know him for yourself. We think you will be energized by his personality, comforted by his caring presence, and delighted with his preaching.

We are immensely grateful to every one of you who offered prayers for the Search Team during this long and sometimes exhausting process. We could not have accomplished our mission without your prayers, your concern, your input, and your questions. We are humbled by your trust in us to identify this outstanding candidate for you.

We formally recommend, unanimously, the calling of Austin Almaguer to be the next Pastor at Vienna Baptist Church.

The VBC Pastor Search Team

Carla Toenniessen, Chair

Ward Kay, Vice Chair

Kira West, Secretary

Lynn Collins

Nancy Curtis

Linda Gooding

Special Called Business Meeting

A special called business meeting will be held on August 17 immediately following the worship service to vote on the candidate for Pastor of Vienna Baptist Church. No other business is scheduled for this meeting. If you have any questions, please contact the office.

A Message from Austin Almaguer Pastor Candidate, Vienna Baptist Church



Warm greetings and blessings to you, VBC!

I am honored by the Pastor Search Team's decision to recommend me as the candidate to be your next Pastor. This opportunity represents the fulfillment of a vocational dream for me, and I am excited by the potential to serve VBC.

My time with the search team has been wonderful and informative. As Alison and I have learned about your history as a congregation, we find ourselves inspired by your commitment to be a thriving church that is a place of God's blessing. And what a blessing you are: a church for thoughtful worship, spiritual growth and service. I believe that VBC is a great church with a rich history and a bright future, a church I feel called to serve as Pastor.

As a people of faith on the journey of life, I am excited to be part of the next chapter in your story. My hope is that together we would claim our unique calling as a church. God has brought this community of faith together for a special purpose, and God is calling us forward to new blessings. This future will be built upon the traditions and values that have sustained VBC over the past 57 years. As we honor our history, I am eager to see how God will fill us with fresh passion and creativity.

Since the first time I read the church profile, I have been drawn to this community of faith. I am filled with promise and delight for the future work that God is yet to do among us in mission and ministry.

With gratitude and hope,
Austin Almaguer

Biographical Information



Austin was born in Houston, Texas, and is the eldest of three sons. Although his parents worked in the business sector, Austin spent much of his early childhood helping work cattle and tending pastures on his grandparents' ranch. Austin first felt a call to ministry in high school and attended Baylor University in Waco, Texas, graduating in 2009 with a bachelor of arts degree in religion. Following graduation he began his studies at Princeton Theological Seminary in Princeton, New Jersey. Seminary was incredibly formative for Austin as his corresponding time teaching

at a Baptist seminary in India and serving as a chaplaincy intern at New Jersey State Prison shaped his understanding of ministry.

Upon his graduation in 2012, Austin was the recipient of Princeton Seminary's Samuel Wilson Blizzard Award in Religion and Society for excellence in the integration of theological depth, social insight and professional skills. Passionate about the global church, he has had meaningful experiences partnering with ministries in India, Kenya, Dominican Republic, Morocco and Mexico. Austin's diverse experiences and friendships have given him an ear and a heart for the way the black church tells the story of redemption. It's a story of liberation and inclusion. And it translates into his desire to be involved in a church that is progressive, inclusive and culturally diverse.

Austin was ordained on October 27, 2013, by Wilshire Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas, where he has been serving as pastoral resident. Wilshire's Pastoral Residency is a unique program modeled after the medical residency experience: young ministers serve as full-time staff ministers with extensive hands-on experience at all levels of pastoral leadership while also receiving intentional mentorship in order to hone their ministerial gifts.

At Wilshire, Austin has preached regularly to a congregation with about 1,000 people in weekly worship attendance. He also has served in a key leadership role guiding the development of a new, seven-year strategic plan. His passion to create a welcoming church environment has helped him lead a growing young adult department and minister to members of all ages.

Austin's wife, Alison, also grew up in Texas. Alison is a graduate of Duke Divinity School and an ordained Baptist minister, currently completing her Clinical Pastoral Education at Parkland Hospital in Dallas, Texas. Both Austin and Alison are excited by the opportunity to join VBC and live in Vienna. As people nourished by music, laughter and good conversations, they can't wait to build friendships in this great community of faith.

Call Weekend Come and Meet Austin Almaguer!

Our candidate for Pastor, Austin Almaguer, and his wife Alison will visit VBC during the weekend of August 15-17. Various opportunities for meeting and conversing are planned. Austin will preach on Sunday, August 17. The Pastor Search Team invites you to join us during the scheduled events. We are excited about this important time in the life of our congregation!

Friday, August 15

11:00-12:00	Visit Vacation Bible School	
12:30 pm	Lunch with PST	Restaurant

Saturday, August 16

9:00- 9:45 am	Breakfast with church staff	Adult Lounge
10:00-10:45 am	Coffee and conversation with parents of young families – Childcare provided	Adult Lounge Playground
11:00-11:45 am	Coffee and conversation with Church Council	Adult Lounge
2:00-4:00 pm	Conversation with congregation	Adult Lounge
6:00-8:00 pm	Dinner with Diaconate	Dorcus Home

Sunday, August 17

9:00 am	Meet with Ministerial Staff	Church Office
9:30-10:30 am	Visit Sunday School classes	
10:50 am	Pray with Chancel Choir	Choir Room
11:00 am	Preach during worship service	
12:00 pm	Brief time of fellowship	Foyer
12:15 pm	Special Called Business meeting to vote on calling the Pastor	Worship Room