

Megachurch Pastor Rick Warren Announces Retirement From Saddleback

Megachurch pastor Rick Warren has announced his retirement after 42 years of leading Saddleback Church in Southern California. A search for his successor will be launched this week.

The well-known evangelical pastor and bestselling author told his congregation on Sunday that the search is not the end but the “beginning of the beginning,” *The Orange County Register* reported Monday.

Warren, 67, said he will continue to serve as lead pastor until a successor is in place. He said he will then step back into a less “visible position as founding pastor.”

There is no timeline for the search, which will look at candidates both within and outside the church. Warren declined to speak about his retirement plans on Monday.

“Kay and I made this crazy promise when we were 25 years old that we would give 40 years to one location, that we wouldn’t move and that we wouldn’t be tempted to go to another church,” Warren said before preaching his 40th Easter service in 2019.

Warren said then that he was offered a series of jobs with Christian organizations, seminaries and denominations, but never moved.

With its main campus in Lake Forest, south of Los Angeles, Saddleback Church has grown to 14 locations in Southern California with an average weekly attendance of 30,000. There are four international campuses, in Hong Kong, Germany, the Philippines and Argentina.

Warren, who has more than 11 million social media followers, has written multiple books, including *The Purpose Driven Life*. In 2005, Time magazine named Warren one of the “100 Most Influential People in the World.” {eo}

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