**Pastoral Report to Council/Congregation (May 6 – June 10, 2023)**

**The months of May & June, thus far** Getting through everything—This is a very busy time at First Lutheran.

**Pastoral goals for Joan and John Beck (May-early June)**

1. *Be responsive and on-site for Wed/Sun schedule, plus meetings, emergencies and care visits*
2. *Continue to encourage trust-building processes*
3. *Facilitate small group gatherings*
4. *Plan with Council next steps for healing based on goals identified at retreat with Bishop’s Associate Melissa Reed*
5. *Plan with Council next steps administratively*
6. *Lead education ministry*
7. *Lead congregation learning events*

**Our activity viewed through goals:**

**1. GOAL: Be on site for Wed/Sun schedule, meetings, worship planning, plus care visits**

The focus of the Easter Season brought us to Trinity Sunday last Sunday. Our presence on Wednesdays is always packed with conversations, meetings, side-bars, home visits, and crisis interventions. The Sunday morning adult class came to a conclusion on Monday night.

**2. GOAL: Introduce trust-building processes**

Trust has now been discussed by the Council, the Transition Team, and the Call Committee. These become venues to practice trust-building. We will take another step in that direction on June 24 at the congregational gathering. Using the Crucial Conversation inventory “Style Under Stress” has provided some leaders with a new language to describe personal and congregational patterns. Many people go to silence under stress. Others believe they are just sharing their opinions, but actually are moving to verbal violence. Helping people talk about these patterns also gives trust a greater chance. We want to help people move from blaming to a greater awareness and curiosity, not just in connection with pastors’ behavior but in general with each other.

**3. GOAL: Facilitate small group gatherings**

While it was once thought this would happen as we moved toward a congregational covenant, we will see what happens on June 24 for next steps.

**4. GOAL: Plan with council the next steps for healing based on goals identified with Pastor Melissa**The Congregation Council goals give four specific areas for identified work and these are the highest priority. Each goal will have specific next steps for tracking progress and accountability.

**5. GOAL: Plan with council next necessary administrative steps**

Pastors Joan and John have listed several specifics for the last several months.

* Keep God at the center as we claim and engage with our mission (Purpose) – through scripture in our meetings and Sunday worship.
* Develop a clear plan for our course forward (Goals) – we have identified 4 key goals at our retreat.
* Regularly evaluate and make course corrections (Ministry review) – we will do this in late July or early August, we hope.
* Develop review processes for our ministry and staff (Staff reviews) – once the personnel committee is formed we will begin these conversations.
* Implement communication protocols and expectations (Communication guidelines) – we seek to embed this approach into all gatherings in creative and new ways.
* Practice speaking directly to one another, especially in conflict (Relationship covenants) – we are helping individuals have one-to-one “shalom conversations” as they are guided by the Holy Spirit.
* Manage conflict in biblical ways, discovering God’s shalom amid difficulties (Congregation education) – we were blessed to have three leaders participate in the Oregon Synod class on congregational conflict. We have also covered biblical shalom processes in adult classes.

**Please notice how these areas have been picked up by the Congregation Council at its Planning Retreat!**

* *Work with the congregation to strengthen our ability to remain in relationship and continue conversation when we have strong emotions and differing opinions.* Office staff has been learning the basics of the “Crucial Conversations” model for dialog around difficult issues. They are also in the process of developing job descriptions that will lend themselves toward review.
* *Consider the use of a congregational covenant(s) to help us talk directly with each other, avoiding gossip or other indirect and unhealthy ways of talking.* The next step for the Congregation Council process of developing a specific covenant for disagreement happens June 24.
* *Officially approve, appoint, and implement a* *Personnel Committee that will be trained and supported as they begin their regular work.* The Congregation Council set this goal and we are recommending that this function be carried out by the Executive Committee.
* *Officially approve, appoint, and implement a Mutual Ministry Committee that will be trained and supported as they begin their regular work.* The Congregation Council will deal with specifics on this process at this month’s meeting.
* *Work with both formal and informal leaders to develop a strategy to implement an annual focus on four basic constitutional tasks of the Congregation Council: mission clarity, long-range planning, setting goals and priorities, and evaluation of its activities* *in light of its mission and goals.* We hope this will emerge even more strongly as Pastor Joan and Jon Vingerud focus on constitutional revision in July. These four foci are key to balanced organizational processes.

**Congregational Officers and Committee Liaisons:** Thanks to all who serve in leadership and especially to Audrey, Mark, Kate, Jon and Barbara for their key roles, and to all who help committee and ministry groups stay connected.

**Transition Team:** The Transition Team was decommissioned last Sunday and handed off the MSP to the Call Committee. The service of thanking the Transition Team and installing the Call Committee was well received.

**Call Committee:** the Call Committee (Matt, Cathy, Laura, Jessie, Mike, Rodney) met with Pastor Melissa on May 16. They met on June 4 to identify key factors being sought in a pastor. They will meet with Pastor Melissa and Pastor Joan on June 14 for anti-bias training and additional work on developing questions for behavioral interviewing that they will do. Next steps will be practice interviews with candidate Pastor Melissa identifies.

**6. GOAL: Plan and help lead education ministry**

Pastor John finished the school-year Sunday morning adult class on June 4 (and Monday night on Zoom June 5). The recent focus was identifying the kinds of training to most benefit First Lutheran as we prepare for the new pastor.

**7. GOAL: Lead congregation learning events** We may invite the congregation to gather June 24.

**OUR OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES**: During the months of May and early June Pastor John and Joan are recovering from leading a six-week Thursday evening class for the Oregon Synod titled: ***ENGAGING CONFLICT FOR GROWTH: In Ourselves, Relationships, and Communities.*** We have also led a 5-session course for the Kaleidoscope Institute for the Oregon Synod on facilitation skill training. This was specifically aimed at Transitional Pastors in the Synod.

***Blessings as we walk together beyond the blessed days of the Easter Season into the Ordinary days where we learn to deepen our faith, due to the grace of God in Christ and not our own strength.***

*Pastors John and Joan Beck*