

Pastoral Report to Council/Congregation (April 15-May 6, 2023)

The months of April-May, thus far

Getting through everything—The Easter season is providing great opportunities for new life.

Pastoral goals for Joan and John Beck (March/early April)

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

Our activity viewed through goals:

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

Pastor Joan's rich and creative liturgies have transitioned into the Easter season of new life. The focus of the Sunday morning adult calss has been the exploration of Holy Currencies. This month, Pastor Joan visited with many people by phone and we supported several folks through surgeries Being welcomed to stay at Clara's home during Holy Week made a huge difference.

2. GOAL: Introduce trust-building processes

Trust allows people to risk difficult conversations with less fear of payback, reprisal, or alienation. But direct communication is not a strong suit in communities that have been wounded by inconsistent leadership. Part of our pastoral role in the complicated situation following Pastor Dew;s abrupt departure is to help a new narrative emerge where people begin to explore new ways of understanding their own behavior and have a greater curiosity about the behavior of others. 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

As specifics emerge about the plan toward a congregational covenant we hope to have a series of important conversations, preferably on a Saturday or on Sunday after church.

4. GOAL: Plan with council the next steps for healing based on goals identified with Pastor Melissa

The Congregation Council Retreat began planning in four specific areas that the group identified as the highest priority. Each goal will have a process for next steps and accountability.

5. GOAL: Plan with council next necessary administrative steps

Pastors Joan and John continue to walk with First Lutheran Church and in partnership with the Oregon Synod. We appreciate the ways some of our specific recommendations to the First Lutheran Church Congregation Council have begun to move forward in concrete plans and actions. The policies and procedures that help to form guard-rails around our life together are beginning to emerge.

- Keep God at the center as we claim and engage with our mission (Purpose) – through scripture in our meetings.
- 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 hope to have this in place during the summer.
- Develop review processes for our ministry and staff (Staff reviews) – the personnel committee is being formed.
- 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) – the new Monday evening zoom class is one way to enable this. Three members taking the Synod conflict class is another.

Please note 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 Congregation Council process of developing a specific covenant for disagreement will get more attention during the summer months.
- *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 seeking the next steps in discernment conversation with several members knowledgeable in this area.
- *Officially approve, appoint, and implement a Pastor/Parish Relations Committee that will be trained and supported as they begin their regular work.* The Congregation Council this goal and discernment of gifts for identifying members is under way.
- *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 Joand and Jon vingerud focus on constitutional revision in the coming months. 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 has handed off the MSP to the Synod and the Call Committee. We will have a special service of de-commissioning them and installing the Call Committee in the weeks ahead. Thanks to one and all.

Call Committee: the Call Committee was elected at the April 16 meeting. (Matt, Cathy, Laura, Jessie, Mike, rodney) and when they met on April 19th they elected Mike as chairperson. Other important roles were divided among the group. They will meet with Pastor Melissa on May 9.

6. GOAL: Plan and help lead education ministry

Pastor John began a Zoom version of the Sunday morning adult class on May 1 and is sharing aspects of the short course on “The Cycle of Blessings,” a Kaleidoscope initiative to support ministries in their outreach and mission. Pastor Joan continues to work with Caleb Sundeen and mentor Mike McCoy, moving towards his confirmation, yet to be scheduled.

7. GOAL: Lead congregation learning events

We may invite the congregation to another event in early Summer.

OUR OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES: During the months of April and May Pastor John and Joan will be leading a six-week Thursday evening class for the Oregon Synod titled: ***ENGAGING CONFLICT FOR GROWTH: In Ourselves, Relationships, and Communities.*** <http://oregonsynod.org/index.php/calendar/engaging-conflict-for-growth/>. All are welcome to engage in this class. We also will be leading a 5-session course for the Kaleidoscope Institute for the Oregon Synod on facilitation skill training. This is specifically aimed at Transitional Pastors in the Synod.



Blessings as we walk together into the blessed days of the Easter Season where life comes out of death, due to the grace of God in Christ and not our own strength.

Pastors John and Joan Beck