

# Transfiguration Lutheran Church



## Transition Process 2021 *Expanded Process Narrative*

## Transition at Transfiguration Lutheran Church

*"You are my [people], I have chosen you and not cast you off".*

*<sup>10</sup> do not fear, for I am with you,  
do not be afraid, for I am your God.  
I will strengthen you; I will help you,  
I will uphold you with my victorious right hand.*

Isaiah 41:9b-10

In December 2020, Pastor Ed Treat concluded his call to pastoral ministry of 10 years with and among you. The loss of pastoral leadership is a significant change in the life of a congregation. The experience of loss and grief is different for every member and every congregation when a pastor departs.

The loss of a pastor can be compared to the experience of "Empty Nesters" who see their children move on to spread their wings, further develop their identity, and explore their future. Parents grieve, learn to "bless and let go" of their young adult children, affirming the life of the child they have loved and supported, asking "Who are we now that its 'just us'"? Who are we? What will we do with our time and energy? What are the gifts and passions that we want to further develop and grow? With whom and how will we share our lives now?

Congregations and members ask similar questions when a pastor concludes ministry among them. Pastors support, guide and shape the identity, mission and ministry of a congregation as they serve in pastoral leadership. With the people, they gather in faith, study scripture, pray and respond to God's blessing and call to live as God's people in the world. When a pastor leaves, a congregation experiences loss and grief. Without the leadership of the pastor a congregation and individual members live with the question, "Who are we without our pastor? What is the future for us?"

In addition to Pastor Ed's departure, Deacon Renee Jefferson and several other key staff leaders retired or concluded their service among you over the past year. The 2020 – 2021 Covid Pandemic reality has created separation and multiple experiences of change and loss.

Transfiguration Lutheran Church is in transition. You are living in a time of change, moving from the past toward a future that lies before you. Into such times, God's reassuring promises spoken through the prophet Isaiah are words for us. God is with us with support and God is present doing a new thing, creating a new way, raising up new life among you for the sake of the world.

*"I am about to do a new thing;  
now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?  
I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert."*

Isaiah 43:19

## Interim Ministry – A specialized ministry and Pastoral Call

Interim Ministry honors the “time-in-between” that a congregation experiences when a pastor leaves. Interim pastors bring skills in the management of change. They support and guide the congregation in on-going ministry and work with members to assess strengths and challenges of the congregation and the context of ministry. They guide and support faithful reflection on scripture and faith, working with the congregation to clarify a shared identity, vision, values, and priorities for the future of congregational ministry.

Change in pastoral staff leadership creates a unique opportunity for congregations to explore:

- Who are we as a *community* of faith?
- What are our gifts, joys, and passions *in faithful life together, and for ministry* in community and with neighbors?
- What is the future to which God is calling us as people of faith, followers of the way of Jesus?
- With whom and how will we share our faith and life?

Together with the TLC Council and Pastor Arthur, Pastor Eva Jensen has designed a transition process for TLC that invites all members to explore these questions as a community.

This discerning work of Transfiguration Lutheran Church members and leaders will prepare the congregation to enter the call process for new pastoral leadership.

Parallel to the congregational process, the **TLC staff will gather for a series of extended staff meetings to strengthen and build a vital and collaborative staff team that supports the mission and ministries of the congregation.**

Tuesdays, 1:30 -3:30 pm – TLC Staff Only

June 15 - Ministry Mapping and associated roles/responsibilities

June 29 - What's working well and what is blocking us from working effectively & collaboratively as a staff team?

July 13 - How can we address these blocks and build a vital team of collaboration in ministry?

July 20 - Report back on Action Teams and/or facilitation training

## **Transfiguration Transition Process and Timeline**

A series of participatory events has been planned to create opportunities for members, staff, and leaders of TLC to express thoughts and ideas about the mission and ministry of Transfiguration Lutheran Church. You are invited to participate in as many events as you like.

These events will be facilitated by Pastor Eva Jensen in a way that encourages all participants to share as well as listen to the thoughts and ideas of one another. Conversations will be focused on key topics and questions of ministry and faith. Together we will review and assess the current reality of TLC ministries. We will develop a shared awareness and understanding of the strengths and challenges of ministry at TLC as well as the opportunities and hopes that we have for the future. We will engage in inspiring, faithful, and creative conversations that generate ideas for the future and a shared vision for Transfiguration's ministry.

### **June 13th - Sunday Worship Focus:**

Overview of TLC Transition Process and Interim Ministry

### **June through August - Six Congregational Imagination Events:**

Sunday afternoons, 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm

TLC Fellowship Hall and Zoom (hybrid) – Childcare provided

Six ministry areas of Transfiguration Lutheran have been identified for focused conversation and planning. You are invited to participate in as many as you like. Pastor Arthur and Pastor Eva will be at each event. We are asking every member to participate in at least one event. Council Members will attend at least two. Transition Team members will participate in at least three.

May 23rd Children, Youth & Family; Intergenerational Ministry  
June 27<sup>th</sup> Property and Building  
July 11<sup>th</sup> Seniors and Care Ministry  
July 18<sup>th</sup> Diversity and Neighbor Engagement  
August 15<sup>th</sup> Mission and Outreach  
August 22<sup>nd</sup> Financial Sustainability

### **Congregational Visioning Event: Saturday, October 9**

9:00 am – 3:00 pm, with lunch – Childcare provided

During this event, Pastor Eva will facilitate a dynamic, fun and stimulating process that invites all participants to reflect on their journey of faith at TLC as well the collective congregational Journey of Faith. Together we will create an image that tells the Story of TLC, ups and downs, transitions and trends, lessons learned, waning energies, hopes and aspirations for the future. We will create a shared understanding of TLC Identity, Mission, Values Behaviors, Messages that we want to send within and beyond our community of faith.

# WHO IS INVOLVED IN WHAT WAYS?

## **All TLC Members**

You are asked to participate in at least one Congregational Imagination Event and the October 9<sup>th</sup> Congregational Visioning Event.

## **Church Council**

You are asked to participate in at least two Congregational Imagination Events and the October 9<sup>th</sup> Congregational Visioning Event.

## **Transition Team:**

This team of congregational leaders will be appointed by the TLC Council in July. This is a high commitment team that will participate fully throughout the transition process: May – November 2021. Team members will participate in at least 3 of the 6 Congregational Imagination Events, collectively review and synthesize the outcomes of the 6 events, participate in the October 9<sup>th</sup> Congregational Visioning Event and the Strategic Planning workshops (approximately 10 - 12 hours in October/November).

## **Ambassadors of the Transition Process**

All Staff and several members of TLC will be serving as Ambassadors of the TLC Transition Process. Their role is to:

- encourage congregation members to participate in the process events,
- support communication about what is happening in the process as it unfolds,
- respond to questions from members
- provide feedback to Pastors and Council

## **TLC Call Committee**

Will be formed by the end of 2021. The Call Committee will lead the TLC call process. The work of the congregation and all that is learned and decided during the Transition Process will inform the work of the Call Committee. They will communicate the model of ministry and responsibilities, roles, gifts, experience, and abilities of the pastoral staff that the congregation needs to support the ministry of the future that is envisioned through the Transition Process.