

We are going to begin this week with an article from our council president, Bill Videtto.

To: Members of Our Saviors Lutheran Church

From: Bill Videtto, Council President

Subject: Process for Replacing Pastor Mark

Hi Everybody, this is the first of several communications you will receive from me or others on the church council regarding the status of replacing Pastor Mark.

The first thing to tell you is our Synod, NALC, has a well-defined process for replacing pastoral leaders. The process is spelled out on the NALC website under "Ministry Discernment." The NALC also has a very qualified professional on staff, Pastor David Wendel, to help with the replacement process.

Since Pastor Mark will be retiring at the end of October, the following steps for finding a new pastor for OSLC have been initiated.

- We have contacted Pastor Wendel at NALC for guidance and counsel.*
- With his help, we have begun the first step in the replacement process - the hiring of an interim pastor. We currently have five potential candidates.*
- We are currently putting together an interview process for those candidates.*

These are the next steps in the process:

- The council will work to find the best candidate to serve as interim between Pastor Mark's departure and the arrival of our next permanent pastor.*
- After the interim is on board, a call committee of six congregants will be formed. The call committee will have one council member - not an officer – and five other congregational members. We will need a good cross section of the congregation on this committee with people who are willing to put in the time to make this call of our new pastor successful.*
- One of the first steps of the call committee will be to work with Pastor Wendel in setting up a congregational workshop for the purpose of defining a profile of what we are looking for in our next pastor.*
- The timing of the workshop should be Nov/Dec. Amidst the pandemic, part or most of the workshop may be online.*
- Per Pastor Wendel, the average length of time for an interim to be on board is 8.2 months.*

That is probably enough for now - more to come later.

Before I leave you though, I urge you to keep the faith - in our church, in Christ, and in the people you worship with. We will emerge stronger than ever.

Thank you and God Bless you.

Bill Videtto

Some Thoughts from Pastor Mark

I thought I'd share some thoughts on the transitions ahead. You've read the opening article by our council president, Bill Videtto. The council and Bill are already doing some great work on this transition. Thank you Bill for your update!

I know the announcement of a pastoral change always causes anxiety in the congregation. It is a change and we don't particularly like change. But we have some key resources in place. Let me share a few things to keep in mind as you look forward:

*Our Saviour's is blessed with great lay leadership. We have a strong council and a great staff. There is excellent and solid leadership as we move forward. We can be confident in the leadership that God has provided.

*The North American Lutheran Church has a good process for handling the leaving of one pastor and calling the next pastor. I know we as a congregation haven't dealt with a pastoral vacancy for 17 years now. But the NALC deals with dozens of these cases each year. They have a good process and strong people guiding the process. They are already involved. You will be well served!

*Transitions aren't all bad. Saying goodbye isn't an easy thing to be sure. And changes can make us nervous. But transition is also a time to evaluate and to look ahead. It is a time to dream and pray and ask where God is leading us. Transitions often lead to growth.

*And most of all, the Good Lord promises to be with us each and every step of this journey. As a congregation we live in the promises of God. That is where we have always been and where we will continue to be. The Lord who has blessed us and guided us to this point isn't about to desert us now. He always has been and always will be our foundation.

There are changes ahead, of course. For both the congregation and me, we will be navigating some new experiences. But we continue in the care of God. And His grace always makes the journey special.

Schedule Change is Coming

We are looking to begin Sunday School on Sunday, October 4. We will offer classes for the youth, but not the adults at this time. Beginning Sunday School will make for a few adjustments to our Sunday morning schedule:

9:00 – 9:45 – Outdoor Worship Service

9:45-10:25 – Sunday School for ages 3 through high school.

10:30 – 11:30 – Indoor Worship Service

A Few More Things On Sunday School

*If you would like to help with teaching and leading Sunday School, please talk with Carmen Nazario or Pastor Mark.

*If you have child who is age 3 or 4, would you please let Carmen or Pastor Mark know. We are putting together a list who is in the class.

*We are planning to make Sunday School as safe as we possibly can. We will set up social distancing in each classroom. And we are requiring that all teachers and students wear masks during Sunday School.

Looking for Change

Another reminder – we have put out a container in the church and are asking for you to donate your loose change. We labeled the container "Looking for Change" and we will leave it out for a few more Sundays. Please donate any loose change you have. All the money collected will be used to support either PATH or the East Texas Food Bank.

Thank you to all who have given for this. We are doing very well. It is great to share this focus on our greater Tyler community!