

Lifetimes

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September 9, 2018

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Update from the Call Committee

Peace and blessings to you. Summer is over and school is starting which seems pretty normal for September, I expect. However, this year at Incarnation we are at a significant point in our journey as a community of Christ as we prepare to call the next senior pastor. This person will lead us and greatly shape our future. Incarnation is in a great spot - a lot of hard work in the previous years has reshaped our Mission, Vision, and Values. We have a long-term plan with six strategic goals and we are a stable, vibrant community.

With Pastor Chris Smith having started in August, I feel we have reached a second major milestone in our process, with Gary Medin’s celebration and retirement being the first. Yet to come, offering a call to a new pastor and the date that new senior pastor becomes part of our community.

To get to the third milestone, there are many things that will happen. You may have seen the visual depiction of the call process posted in the display cases at Incarnation. Coming up:

- Town Hall with Bishop Patricia Lull (Wednesday September 12, 6:30 p.m.)
- Small Group Discussion Forums (will be scheduled soon)
- Calling of Names from the Synod and Congregation
- Reviewing Potential Pastors
- Congregational Meeting to Select the New Pastor
- Offering the Call
- New Senior Pastor Starts

Unfortunately, these steps are not on a fixed time line. We will move as quickly or as slowly as the Holy Spirit directs us. Your involvement is welcomed and encouraged. Please attend the large format town hall meeting or one of the small format discussion meetings. Please pray for our community, the Call Committee, and the pastor that will become our next leader.

There are many ways to connect with the Call Committee. Attend the large format, small format discussion forums, contact any Call Committee member, contact Pastor Smith, drop a note in the Call Committee Mail Box in the Incarnation Office, or contact me directly (through the Incarnation Office). We appreciate your support, prayers, and patience as we move forward in faith.

Prayerfully submitted,
Dave Katzke

Members of the Call Committee: Amy Johnson, Anne Cremons, Brenda Roloff, Dave Katzke, Emily Schwieters, George Aram, Heather Trettel, Jim Fruehling, and Mike Styba.

From The Staff

Chris Smith

Interim Senior Pastor



First Impressions and The Call Process

Thank You!

What a welcoming community Incarnation is! You have been so kind and welcoming as I have begun my service at the church. I am deeply impressed by the staff, the dedication of your leaders, and the purposeful mission that guides Incarnation. This is an exciting time for Incarnation and I consider it a privilege to walk with you during this time of transition.

The Call Process: The Spirit is in Charge

The most common question I am asked during pastoral transitions is how long it will be before the next senior pastor is in place. Sometimes people are disappointed when I tell them that I don’t know. The Holy Spirit is in charge of this process, which is a very good thing indeed. Calling a new pastor is not a hiring process, with set deadlines and schedules settled in advance. The ministry of calling your next senior pastor is a process of discernment, prayer, and openness to the will and purposes of God. For that reason, you can count on a very positive outcome as the Holy Spirit works in God’s good time.

At the same time, keep in mind that Incarnation is a healthy community of faith. I have served in interim roles where there were several widely shared concerns within a faith community that needed to be addressed before a call process could even begin. This sort of preliminary work is not needed at Incarnation. Certainly, it is important for you all to be aware of how you miss the service of your prior senior pastor and to prepare yourselves in a variety of ways to receive and welcome your next senior pastor with openness to new ideas and possibilities. But that process of letting go and preparing to welcome has already been at work for a time. For this reason, key actions and processes of calling a new pastor are already underway and an important step is coming up soon.

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Town Hall Meeting: Reviewing the MSP

Saint Paul Area Synod Bishop Patricia Lull will lead a town hall style meeting at Incarnation on Wednesday, September 12 at 6:30 p.m. One key purpose of this meeting is to review and discuss the Ministry Site Profile (MSP) of Incarnation Lutheran Church. The MSP is a document that describes ILC for prospective candidates in significant depth and detail. Incarnation has a very capable Call Committee and they have been developing Incarnation's MSP for some time. As I write this in August, plans are in place to revise the draft MSP and submit it for Council review and approval in September. The document will be shared with the congregation after Council approval and before the town hall meeting.

Participate, Keep Up to Date, Pray

At the town hall meeting, your church leaders will also share other information about the call process and opportunities for your input. Dave Katzke, chair of the Call Committee, has provided an update in this same issue of Lifetimes where he has encouraged your participation. Let me add my encouragement to Dave's: Take advantage of opportunities to contribute to the call process:

- At a small group discussion, share your insights about the kind of leader incarnation needs.
- Review church communications to track this important call process.
- Pray for God's wisdom and direction for the Call Committee and the whole congregation.

Thank you for your kind welcome! I am grateful to serve at Incarnation during this important time.

See You in Church,
Pastor Chris Smith

Share the Grace

By Janet Karvonen-Montgomery, Pastor for Wellness and Generosity

*For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever,
and his faithfulness to all generations (Psalm 100:5).*

The verse above may come from the Old Testament, but it is gospel or good news to people of faith. As followers of Jesus, we stake our hope in God's faithfulness to all generations. Each of us has a story of how we came to hear the gospel, the good news of Christ. As recipients of God's steadfast love and faithfulness, we are called to share God's love and grace with the world.

The gospel changes lives! As a longtime member of Incarnation, I can attest - personally and on behalf of others - to how I have seen lives transformed by faith in Jesus Christ. Now, as a pastor for generosity, it is a joy and privilege to work alongside you to share God's powerful love and grace in the world.

The remarkable ways that we are feeding hungry hearts, bodies, minds and spirits are the result of faithful people coming together and joining their gifts with others. Our facility is critical to our ability to live out our mission. The people of this faith community continue to respond generously to our shared mission, all while greatly reducing the interest expense on our building by prepaying the mortgage.

Each fall the members and friends of Incarnation are invited to financially support the mission and vision of the congregation. Share the Grace is the name of the campaign to support the annual operating budget for 2019 and the building fund for 2018 - 2020. Pledge materials will be mailed to you for your prayerful consideration toward Commitment Sunday on November 11. Your submitted financial pledges give our staff time to carefully plan for the work of ministry in 2019 and beyond. Together, we make a difference through your generous participation in the life of this faith community! Thank you.

"Hungry"

By Vernita Kennen

"Hungry" is an important and valued word for Incarnation. We know that feeding the hungry is what God calls us to do. Our congregation's mission statement is: *"Filled by God's grace, we feed the hungry in heart, body, mind and spirit"*. Feeding the hungry differs if we are considering the heart, mind, body, or spirit. Often it is a combination of two or more of these areas.

The Hunger Advocacy and Awareness group at Incarnation focuses on the "body" aspects of hunger but we recognize that food insecurity relates to other forms of hunger, too. We consider the connections between hunger, poverty, lack of affordable housing, health care, affordable child care, lack of transportation, unemployment/underemployment, and more.

Food shelves and feeding programs do help those who live with hunger, especially in the short term. The Hunger Advocacy and Awareness group is more concerned with why people are hungry and how programs and policies can be organized and changed in ways that are sustainable so people do not have to continue to be food insecure. Nancy Vanderburg, longtime group member, says "I care about and am eager to work toward eliminating hunger worldwide because we can do this! There is enough food to feed our world; we need to work to make it happen."

We meet on the third Tuesday evening of the month, September - May, and learn on a June field trip. Reading and discussing a book related to hunger annually helps us become more aware of both domestic and global hunger needs as well as possible solutions. We learn together what we can do as individuals, as faith communities, and as citizens to feed those who hunger. Don Martin replies, "I now understand more about the history of hunger issues and that we have been making progress in eliminating hunger is inspiring. Learning why hunger persists helps me support efforts that most effectively address the problem."

Contact Vernita Kennen, at dvkennan@aol.com, if you are interested in joining the group - you would be most welcome.



Welcome Amy Maakestad



Amy Maakestad has been hired as the new Organist and Handbell Choir Director at Incarnation. Amy is an experienced church musician having served several churches in the Twin Cities area, most recently at St. Mark's Lutheran Church in North St. Paul. Amy is also the artistic and music director of Twin Cities Bronze (an auditioned, community handbell ensemble).

Amy has a Bachelor of Music in Piano Performance and a Master of Sacred Music in organ and choral conducting. She is married and she and her husband are the parents of two children. Amy started her position at Incarnation on July 1. When you see Amy, extend a word of welcome to Incarnation.

Thank You!



By Nate Bergengren

Dear Incarnation,

Yes, all of you... greetings! I received word from Pastor Joel recently of the gift of financial support as I pursue my degree from Luther Seminary - this is such good news. I cannot fully express to you how happy this has made me and my family; it cannot be overstated how much this gift has inspired confidence in where I am going and what God is doing in my life. To know that this wonderful gift will cover the cost of a number of my required classes is such an encouraging reality. What an investment in who I am becoming, who I am in Christ! Thank you so much!

I intend to put this generous gift to the best-possible use, as I endeavor to complete my education and become a better leader in God's church. You should know the part you are playing has been a crucial element in my continued development. Not only through your financial assistance, but originally through my participation in Wednesday night youth ministry, Celebration of Passage, Service of Confirmation, and Family Camp at Camp Wapo have I felt the strength of your support and the quality of this community. My family has even begun attending worship in Incarnation Hall on Sunday evenings. Since 2014, I have felt through you the embodied love of God, after which you are named, Incarnation, a very fitting way to think about the role you have played in my life.

If there is ever anything more you need from me, be it in an official staff capacity, or simply as a member of the community, please don't hesitate to ask. Thank you for your ongoing investment in what God is doing through me. What a blessing you are to me and the church!

Incarnation Lutheran Church

Worship, Prayer & Among the Congregation

Sympathy to: Robert Elliott and family on the loss of his sister, Georgia Nauman and family on the death of her mother.

Recently Baptized: Jackson Bradley, son of Anna and Clayton Sawatzke.

Congratulations to: Stephen Trapp and Katie Trapp (Strand).

Connect and Grow

Discover Incarnation

Discover Incarnation is offered for anyone who wants to learn more about Incarnation's mission, vision, and values, and is required for those who wish to step into membership. Childcare is available for those who make an advance registration. Registration is due October 24 by 4:30 p.m.

When: Saturday, October 27, 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Youth, Family and Adult Tanzania Mission Trip

Spend time with Incarnation's partners of Mkwawa and Kigamboni Lutheran Churches, connect with people of the Huruma Center Orphanage, and meet secondary school students while also building relationships with your travel companions. A \$500 non-refundable deposit holds your spot. The total cost is \$4,700 per person. Fundraising will be possible. Contact Becky Benson at bbenson@incarnationmn.org. Learn more at incarnationmn.org by searching "Tanzania".

When: June 15 - 30, 2019; register by September 24, 2018.

Reading Richard Rohr Small Group

Read and talk about Richard Rohr's book, *The Naked Now*, while connecting with others in a small group setting. This book explores how to be present to each moment and to God, by drawing on the Christian contemplative traditions, the Gospels and Paul's writings. Leader: Anne Cremons. Suggested contribution: \$10. Register: dfloe@incarnationmn.org.

When: Once/week on Mondays, 9 - 10:30 a.m., October - November.

Present Over Perfect Small Group for Moms (with high school/college/young adult children)

Step aside from the busy pace to connect with other moms and be refreshed and renewed. This small group will talk about the faith study, *Present Over Perfect* and find ways to move away from a frantic life toward a life centered on God's love and grace. Suggested contribution: \$5. Register: dfloe@incarnationmn.org.

When: Once/month on Wednesdays, 8:15 - 9:45 a.m., October - March.

Contemplative Prayer with the St. John's Bible Small Group

Connect with others to reflect on images and texts from the St. John's Bible. New morning and evening groups will use a contemplative prayer practice (*lectio/visio divina*) to reflect, talk about, and pray with the illuminations and texts. Suggested contribution: \$15. Register: dfloe@incarnationmn.org.

When: Once/month on Thursdays, 7 - 8:30 p.m. (Leaders: Grant and Deb Rykken) OR Once/month on Wednesdays, 6:45 a.m. - 8:00 a.m. (Leader: Claudia Wiebold)

Grateful Small Group

Explore gratitude as a spiritual practice and a way of living that connects us with God and with one another. This small group will read and talk about *Grateful*, by Diana Butler Bass on five Tuesday evenings. This book unpacks the role of gratitude in our lives and our world, along with practical suggestions for reclaiming this spiritual practice. Leader: Denise Floe. Suggested contribution: \$10. Register: dfloe@incarnationmn.org.

When: Five Tuesdays, 6:30 - 8:00 p.m., October - December.

Faith before Work Small Group for Men

Get together with a group of men and start the week with a brief faith study and prayer before heading to work or other activities. The group meets at Incarnation. No homework or preparation needed. Leader: Tim Gray. Suggested contribution: \$10. Register: dfloe@incarnationmn.org.

When: Twice/month on Mondays, 6:30 - 7:30 a.m.

Children, Youth and Family

Fall Family Fun

Families, join us at the Pine Tree Apple Orchard on Friday, October 12, 5:30 - 7:00 p.m. Come and enjoy a hayride, pumpkin patch, delicious apples, and a meal. Cost: \$25 per family. Sign-up in the Incarnation Office by October 8, after this date you will be placed on a wait list.

When: Friday, October 12, 5:30 - 7:00 p.m.

Serve

Solid Ground Winter Coat Drive

Help families at Solid Ground stay warm this winter. Donate new or clean gently-used winter coats, boots, hats, gloves and scarves of all sizes to keep families warm as they walk in the cold to bus stops and play in the snow this winter. Boots are especially in short supply. Please drop off winter wear in the Coat Drive Box located in the Atrium.

When: September 3 - October 8.

continued...

Congregational Business

Town Hall Meeting: Meeting with the Bishop - Call Committee Update

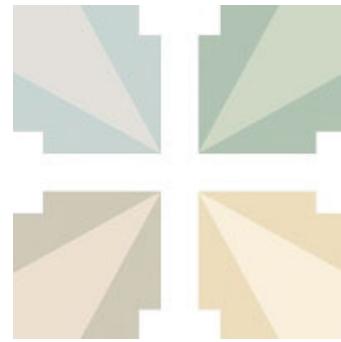
All are invited to a town hall style meeting at Incarnation. At this gathering, the Bishop will lead a large section of the meeting to review the Ministry Site Profile (MSP), discuss the pastoral call process, and respond to questions. The MSP is a document that provides detailed information about the congregation and its ministry. Once the MSP is reviewed and officially approved by the Synod and posted on the ELCA website, it is available for review by potential candidates for the call to serve as Senior Pastor at Incarnation. Please keep this meeting and the call process in your prayers. Childcare will be provided for the Town Hall Meeting for children birth through seven years of age with advance registration by Wednesday, September 5 by 4:30 p.m. Children eight years of age and older are invited to assist in the supervising of children in the nursery. Visit the Incarnation website under "Congregational Business" for more information.

When: Wednesday, September 12, 6:30 p.m.

Save the Date - 2018 Volunteer Appreciation Event

Mark your calendars! The 2018 Volunteer Appreciation Dinner will be held Thursday, November 1 from 6 - 7:30 p.m. Watch for more promotion of this event in the coming weeks.

When: Thursday, November 1, 6 - 7:30 p.m.; RSVP will be due October 25.



Incarnation Lutheran Church Office: 651-484-7213

Web Site: incarnationmn.org - If registering online, most major debit and credit cards accepted
If payments are made at the Incarnation Office, Visa and Mastercard are accepted for payment.

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