

Dear Fellow Members of St. John's:

With deep gratitude, tempered by sadness, your Council acknowledges and accepts the resignation of Pastor Joseph Crippen as Senior Pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church as he moves to new ministry opportunities as the pastor of Mount Olive Lutheran Church in Minneapolis.

Pastor Crippen has been a good and faithful servant to the mission and ministry of St. John's for the past 14 years. As members of this body, we will miss his passion for, and excellence at, preaching, teaching and leading worship. As elected leaders of this congregation, we will miss his leadership, his commitment to the work of St. John's in this community, and his unwavering faith that our times are truly in God's hands, and that God is able, through His mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think.

We ask for your prayers of support and blessing upon Pastor Crippen and his family as he moves to this new area of ministry, and pray that he will be a blessing to the ministry and mission of Mount Olive Lutheran. We offer our thanks to God for the 14 years of ministry that Pastor Crippen has given to St. John's.

Pastor Crippen's last Sunday will be September 12. We will be planning a reception of farewell and thanksgiving in his honor for that day in St. John's Hall. Further details will be forthcoming. We hope you can be a part of this celebration.

As we now begin the process of moving forward during this time of transition, the congregation needs to be aware of several items of importance:

The Executive Committee of the Council has had preliminary discussions with the Synod office on the processes of securing an Interim pastor. We anticipate receiving the names of several qualified candidates to fill this transitional role and would hope to conduct interviews with these candidates in August. An Interim pastor is not "called" to a ministry position, rather, they are contracted to a specific ministry position. Under such contract, all parties...St. John's, the Interim Pastor, and the Synod typically have a 30-day notice period with which to end an Interim's contract to the church.

The By-Laws of the Congregation stipulate that the call of the Associate Pastor of St. John's is co-terminus with that of the outgoing Senior Pastor within 6 months of St. John's securing a new Senior Pastor. This does not preclude the Associate from offering his / her name for consideration as Senior Pastor as part of that call process, nor does it preclude the congregation from issuing a new call to the current Associate Pastor under the new Senior Pastor's consent. Regardless, given this stipulation, the leadership of St. John's will be spending focused time with Pastor Mark Johnson during this transition to fully understand his hopes and expectations. We especially ask for your prayers of support and discernment for Pastor Mark during this time.

As we move forward during this period of transition, a Call Committee will be formed. The work of the Challenge Group and the results of the recent congregational survey will provide us a significant "leg-up" as we begin the process of discernment in deciding the focus and direction of new Senior pastoral leadership for St. John's.

Finally, on a personal note, I would ask for your prayers of wisdom and guidance for your elected leadership as we manage this period of transition, and eventually begin the process of selecting new Senior pastoral leadership for St. John's.

Sincerely,

Timothy Eklund, President