

INTRODUCTION

Before you is the completed report and recommendations of the Transition Team led by Interim Senior Pastor Bill Odermann. This report simplifies data graciously given to us by you, the congregation, staff, recent new members, current council members, and past council presidents.

In what follows, you will see three reports from three sub-groups that made up the entire 13 member transition team of **Deb Bastian, Carolyn Drexler, Becky Eikanger, Alan Gramentz, Marlene Ingebritson, Jim Jore, Scott Nelson, Chris Peters, George Putnam, Beth Sletta, Paul Wilker, Carolyn Varland, and Beth Madsen.**

This report summarizes and simplifies the massive data received in a manner easily read and shared with congregation and leadership. This document will also inform, guide and define the call process just ahead of us.

My heartfelt gratitude and thanks to this team for their dedication, time and efforts in working with me! My thanks also to cottage meeting hosts, council leadership (past and present) and staff for helping us come to this stage in the interim process!!

My thanks especially to the 139 congregational members that participated in the cottage meetings and gave us extremely valuable data!

Interim Senior Pastor Bill Odermann

This completed self-study will also be posted on our website. Hard copies will be made available to all interested family units. *One per family unit please!*

Three forums for feedback, questions, and answers about this self-study are scheduled as follows:

Sunday, September 18th - 10:00AM in the Social hall

Wednesday, September 21st - 6:00 PM in the Social hall

Sunday, September 25th – 10:00 AM in the Social Hall

Please read through this document prior to attending. Bring questions!

Mission/Vision Subgroup

Our Savior's Lutheran Church

MISSION STATEMENT

- A Welcoming Community, Experiencing God, Reaching Out and Raising Up Followers of Jesus Christ

SUPPORTING VISION STATEMENTS

- We experience God through meaningful fellowship, creative music and worship in an atmosphere where relationships are warm and inviting as we hear God's Word together in Word and Sacrament and are challenged by our leadership to share the Good News.
- We are committed to being a positive Christian influence in our community through our facilities and resources, opening our hearts and our doors to those hurting and needing a church to call 'home.' Historically, God shaped us into a safe, open, welcoming community that believes 'all are welcome because Jesus Christ welcomes all.'
- We are passionate about reaching out to those we consider our 'church family' as well as those who need to hear the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Our pastoral care and prayer ministries authenticate the Gospel to those whose lives we touch.
- We are an intergenerational church, committed to nurturing faith and relationship with Jesus Christ at all age levels and inspiring our people to follow Jesus Christ.

Staffing Needs Subgroup

The staffing needs subgroup consisted of four individuals: Marlene Ingebritson, Paul Wilker, Beth Sletta and Carolyn Varland. Our task was to interview all current staff and boards regarding position descriptions, responsibilities and the vision of our OSLC.

Recommendations concerning our organizational structure based on our interviews:

- 1. We recommend to the Church Council that a fall organizational retreat be held to :**
 - Revisit and improve all staff job descriptions
 - Improve lines of communication among Boards, Council and Staff
 - Create a flow chart to establish clear lines of authority among Boards, Staff and Council
 - Reactivate the Personnel Committee as an important part of our organizational structure.
- 2. We recommend to the Church Council that OSLC strongly support a fulltime Youth and Education Pastor or Director.**
- 3. We recommend to the Church Council that a paid part time staff support position be created to manage OSLC financial affairs in order to assist the Church Secretary.**
- 4. We recommend to the Church Council to support the music ministry program, i.e., financial resources and reinstating a Worship Planning Committee.**

Recommendations to guide our search for our new Senior Pastor

- **Leadership:** Guide the staff and Boards in a direct manner - decision maker - deal with conflict resolution effectively.
- **Accountability:** Getting things done in a timely manner.
- **Integrity:** Trustworthy .
- **Effective Communicator** (good interpersonal skills): Keep lines of communication open with clear expectations of staff and Boards.
- **Vision and Passion:** To lead our congregation forward into the future – using the staff and board’s gifts.
- **Administrator:** Team builder – Build staff direction.

Respectfully submitted: Marlene Ingebritson, Paul Wilker, Beth Sletta, Carolyn Varland

PAST COUNCIL PRESIDENTS CONVERSATION

Twenty past council presidents offered their insights and experiences of working directly with pastors in leading the congregation. Topics discussed included *leadership versus management*, *vision and leadership*, *pastoral legacies*, and *leadership for the future*. Below are six statements that summarize that conversation between them and Interim Pastor Bill Odermann.

- We need a Senior Pastor who primarily leads us by vision while understanding enough about management to lead our congregation, direct and support staff and communicate well across the board. Our Senior Pastor needs to be balanced between being principle-based (organization-driven) and value-based (God-driven).
- The most fondly remembered pastors were skilled visionaries who also paid attention to critical details like communication, building trust, keeping their word and following through on their commitments. They did not get bogged down in details and become maintenance-oriented.
- Our pastors have always nurtured our welcoming spirit among us and we never want to lose that!
- Integrity in word and deed along with being 'human,' 'personable,' and 'approachable' were long-standing positive experiences and memories.
- In our church as a whole, better communication is needed across the board from pastors down through council and boards. Everyone within the entire church, not just pastors and staff, have this responsibility.
- Pastors need to be our 'spiritual conscience' and leave business, financial matters, and certain administrative details in the hands of gifted people and boards. They need the freedom to be our pastors!

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Bill Odermann

Self-Study Sub-Group

Our sub-group consisted of four members: Carolyn Drexler, Jim Jore, Scott Nelson, and Chris Peters.

Our Purpose: To design a report that articulates how our data helps our congregation understand its identity, personality, strengths and weaknesses. Our efforts were also designed to serve the larger purpose of the call committee to identify the gifts and qualities needed in the role of Senior Pastor as voiced in our cottage meetings.

Present/Ongoing Concerns:

- Our finances including our debt load and level of giving.
- Church attendance and members 'not coming.'
- We are a large church with 'three congregations,' referring to our three separate worship services
- Communication among staff and boards needs improvement.
- Clarity in roles and responsibilities are important for the future.
- A handful of members mentioned the ELCA sexuality vote.
- There was discussion about the pastoral roles and in some cases the difference between associate and senior pastor roles needed to be explained by Pastor Bill as they had become 'blended' and unclear over time.
- Concern for an overworked, stressed staff and the possibility of more help to alleviate those issues.

OSLC Strengths (top answers stated):

- Youth programs
- Music programs
- A positive spiritual climate that is warm, friendly, welcoming and 'feels like home.'
- Our staff was commended for their dedication. Desire was expressed to care for them and retain them.

OSLC Weaknesses (top answers stated):

- Attendance—membership is there, but people don't come=outreach
- Multiple services—each one is a separate group, but can we connect and fellowship?
- Maybe too tight with giving

Greatest Gift from our Pastoral Leadership (top answers stated):

- Connection, relationship with the congregation was deemed extremely important for the future.

- Leadership that leads with integrity
- Friendship & Compassion was also stressed.

Greatest Gift from a Staff Member (top answers stated):

- Dedication, friendship, involvement in one's life
- Generosity
- Their spiritual depth has made a huge difference in people's lives.

Desired Qualities and Gifts in a New Senior Pastor (top answers stated):

- Someone who exemplifies the Christian Life with honesty, integrity and sincerity in executing their role.
- Someone who is compassionate and cares about the congregation.
- A person of high Christian standards.
- A person who leads and communicates with love and compassion.

Self-Study Overview

Phone Questions for New Members

The entire transition team participated in successfully contacting roughly 48% of the 185 new adult members who joined in the last five years. Here is a summary of what we learned according to *most common responses*:

What about OSLC attracted you to become a member?

- Youth programs: little ones through high school involved
- Friendly and welcoming
- Feels like home/family atmosphere

What did OSLC offer you and are you still benefiting from?

- Children/youth programs/Sunday School
- Family/friendly atmosphere
- Comfort level with Pastor Joyce

What makes OSLC 'Different' compared to other churches you visited?

- Atmosphere—very friendly, welcoming, warm, inviting
- Members greet you and talk to you/introduce themselves
- Pastors and ministry provided to youth and children

Any suggestions/concerns to offer Present Leadership?

- Keep doing what you are doing
- Commitment and volunteerism could be better

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL:

- We recommend to council that we search for a new senior pastor that exemplifies the above mentioned qualities.
- We recommend that we care for our staff and help them succeed in their roles.
- We recommend that we find ways to reach out to members not currently attending.

Respectfully submitted: Carolyn Drexler, Jim Jore, Scott Nelson, and Chris Peters