

An Open Letter to Members of All Saints Lutheran Church

October 14, 2024

Dear Friends in Christ,

All Saints Lutheran Church means a lot to me. I believe you would say the same thing.

Over the next several months, at least through March, our Board will be initiating the Call Process. The Board will be hosting at least four conversations with as many members as we can gather to assess the current state of our mission and ministry.

One session will ask members gathered to identify what is most important to you about who we are and what we do as a congregation in Christ. I am writing to urge you to attend and add your voice.

After this session we will ask each member to interview a friend of yours, someone in the community, not associated with All Saints. You will have three short questions. That's all. But this is also important data.

The third session will gather what we have been hearing. What are we saying about ourselves? What are our neighbors saying about us? What's the big picture illustrating our identity and presence in this place at this time?

The last session in this "go round" asks, "What next?"

All this information now goes to the Bishop and to the Call Committee.

Who are the Call Committee? We need them to be people of prayer who have a heart for this church, its people, our Lord and our world.

We are not like a business, advertising, seeing who might be available to work for us. We are a ministry. So, we begin and continue with prayer. *We are asking God to show us the person whom God is preparing already to be our pastor.* We asking that God work powerfully through the Holy Spirit that this person, unknown to us now and unnamed, will be prepared and will find the heart to say "Yes!" to God's call.

So as someone sitting beside you in the pew, I am begging you to make this a priority. Attend every session you can. Listen well. Listen to your fellow member, your neighbor, your own heart and the Spirit within you.

If you feel so moved by God and you are asked to sit on the Call Committee, I beg you to prayerfully consider saying, "Yes, by the help of God."

I would not ask you to agree to something you do not understand or to commit to a timeline that is not reasonably understandable.

So, I will be gathering those who are considering serving ,or who have already agreed to serve, to participate in an orientation session. We will look at the Call Manual. We will clarify what roles belong to the Board, to the Call Committee and to the members at large. As many of us as can will meet in person. There will also be the option of joining online. Watch for the date in a couple weeks.

In the time that follows, when the Committee is installed and set to work, there will be some discernment, some record keeping, some more clarifying... and eventually some interviews.

There will be two meetings with Bishop Trish Schmermund who will set some limits on us, but open to us more possibilities. There will be opportunities to make nominations and to hear her recommendations.

Then come the interviews. But it may be April. Eventually there will be a Call Meeting and a vote.

All of this happens in, with, and under prayer!

This may be some of the most important work you participate in with this church.

Spring is not a bad time to plant some seeds. But first we work the soil, clear some rocks, and pull some weeds. It takes patience. It takes work.

Please, worship often!

Do you remember when your family was expecting a child? It took months! And there were some uncomfortable moments once in a while. But there were also some wonderful dreaming, preparing, and celebrating moments as well.

Will you serve on the Call Committee? Seven will mean balanced work and cover absences when life needs us elsewhere.

Will you attend every public session you possibly can?

Consider this. God is preparing our next Pastor. God is also preparing us!

Thanks be to God.

Pastor Dave Saude, retired