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September 29, 2021

Dear MLC friends,

I give thanks to God for the gift and call to serve with you as your Senior Pastor since 2011. Now, trusting in God's grace and love, I have discerned a new direction for my life and ministry, and am resigning my call as Senior Pastor. My last Sunday will be Reformation Day, October 31, 2021, and my last day in the office will be Wednesday, November 3.

I have discerned God's call to enter a program to become a spiritual director/companion, meeting one-on-one with individuals to help them hear where God is moving and working in their lives. I am looking forward to using my ministry gifts in this way, and entering a new chapter in my work as a pastor.

One of the great gifts of MLC has been my partnership with Pastor Kelli Schmit and a dedicated staff! Pastor Kelli has been aware of my decision for a few months, and plans to continue at MLC in her call as Associate Pastor. The Church Council will be in contact with our Bishop and synod office to arrange for an interim Senior Pastor, and begin the process for calling a new pastor to the faith community of MLC.

My heart is full of gratitude to have served in this vibrant, life-giving ministry at MLC. God has been alongside us in very powerful ways over the last 10 years, and will continue to be with MLC as you begin ministry with your new pastor.

Welcoming a new pastor during this transition requires healthy boundaries for ministry. After Nov. 3, I will no longer be one of your pastors. I will no longer preach, teach and administer the sacraments at MLC, nor will I be available for pastoral care, funerals or weddings. While this may sound restrictive to some, these guidelines for ordained ministry are in place with our synod so that healthy relationships and ministries may be formed with your new pastor.

My focus in the time that I have left at MLC will be to say goodbye to you, and celebrate the steadfast love of Christ that we have shared in our time together. MLC is in a strong position to enter a new phase of ministry. This goes much deeper than individual gifts or ministries. My confidence is based on God's enduring faithfulness with you and for you. Psalm 100 says it well: "Good indeed is the LORD, whose steadfast love is everlasting, whose faithfulness endures from age to age." (Psalm 100:5)

Let us give thanks for God's steadfast love and faithfulness throughout every transition in our lives.

May God bless and guide you in discerning God's call to ministry in the next chapter of MLC!

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Tim