

God's Love truly grows Community here at Our Saviours' Evangelical Lutheran Church.

The Transition Team has eight members in addition to Pastor Karen Behling our Interim Pastor: Scot Bigalke Theresa Chatelle, Ann Erickson, Michelle Mayo-Hellie, Lonnie Menard, Kathleen O'Connor, Dave Oxley, and Jan Tripp.

We are NOT the Call Committee, but we are part of the Call Process

What have we been doing?

We have engaged in Active Listening, engaged in Conversations, consulted church records, and began writing the Ministry Site Profile.

The Transition Team is part of Phase 2 of the Call Process.

- Phase 1 is the leave taking of the retiring Senior Pastor.
- Phase 2 is the Transition Team and Interim Ministry.
- Phase 3 is the Call Committee.
- Phase 4 is Beginning New Ministry

The assignment of the Transition Team is to gather the data/ information necessary to complete the Ministry Site Profile.

The Ministry Site Profile is the Document that the Call Committee will share with the Synod and potential candidates.

The goal of the Transition Team is to hear from as many participants in our congregation as possible to complete picture of our congregation.

The transition team began by meeting monthly during the summer and is meeting bi-weekly listening and compiling data to move us forward in completing the ministry site profile.

- The transition team has engaged in over 100 -one on one listening sessions with congregational participants ages 10-100 this summer and early fall.
- A central value we are hearing is Community.
- After hearing that the church values community, council and staff adopted a theme for 2025: God's Love Grows Community.

THE DATA SHOWS WE ARE NOT THE SAME.

WHAT REALLY MATTERS IS THE LOVE OF GOD UNITES US BEYOND ANY DIVISION!

This fall we added Four Engagement Boards in the Gathering Space so that we could hear from more people. We decided to use surveys to obtain information as to the Characteristics of our Congregation.

The Engagement Boards showed that our congregation believes that:

- God is leading growth in Our Saviours in the areas of Community and Youth.
- The most important actions OSEL is taking to support growth are Youth and a variety of other actions.
- What makes our congregation strong and helps us grow is being open and our Youth.
- Finally, our congregation believes the challenges limiting growth are lack of community outreach/engagement and lack of volunteers and lack of conversation.

The Surveys showed that the participants believe:

- Our Saviours' Community is formal or programmatic, with most people believing that we have clearly defined goals and plans for the future, in a demographically homogenous place. (Some participants indicated that we have no stated goals or plans and that we are economically diverse.)
- Our Saviours' leadership style is fairly balanced between new ideas and the tried true; fairly balanced between leader driven and group driven decisions, split between those believe we handle conflict well and those who report conflict avoidance.
- Our Saviours' Programming allows our facilities to be used for community groups and is focused on ideas and beliefs. Participants are more divided on the question of whether people are trained to minister only inside our walls or outside our walls as well.
- Our Saviours' Theological Perspective is obviously Lutheran in ideas and practice, and participates in community and regional activities. While the majority believe we focus on bible stories and doctrine some believe that we focus on community issues.

Engagement Board 1: Where do you feel God is leading growth in Our Saviour's?

5 Community/ 9 youth

1. In all of us together as community in Christ.
 2. Community outreach.
 3. The people. The people of our church are amazing. It truly feels like a faith family.
 4. Urging us to support the community with current service projects that can give us a better sense of community at Our Saviour's.
 5. Increasing community at Our Saviour's across all ages.
1. Youth programming & new leadership opportunities with new pastor.
 2. Empower youth & their families as important here.
 3. More youth involvement & activities.
 4. Bring in youth activities.
 5. Through the youth.
 6. God & life and other events.
 7. Keep the youth coming.
 8. Keep our youth engaged.
 9. To serve the youth that are the future.

Engagement Board 2: What is Our Saviour's currently doing that is most important to continue to support growth?

2 youth.

1. Youth program!
 2. Youth programs. Very welcoming.
1. Engaging activities.
 1. Love, repentance, forgiveness.
 1. Continue to welcome all.
 1. Parish Nurse has been a wonderful addition. I wonder if a small group could do visits for those unable to drive.
 1. Encouraging new ideas from everyone.

Engagement Board 3: What do you see at Our Saviour's right now that makes us strong and helps us grow?

3 open/ 5 youth

1. Keep minds open & information flowing.
 2. Open minds & Pastors that are accepting of all.
 3. Been a member for 37 years and I appreciate that the church is open to new things and not keeping it so , "old school."
1. Youth programs. Very friendly & welcoming church.
 2. Camp Wapo.
 3. Our youth program is key to the growth and health of our church. We need to support this program. 4 & 5. Youth programming.
1. Teaching biblical truth and values.
 1. Community
 1. Asking hard questions that make us uncomfortable in the name of growth.
 1. Our Contemporary service is my favorite. The band in the service is so talented and fills my soul.
 1. Adult bible study. Intro to the bible.
 1. Keep Parish nurse.
 1. I believe we have a lot of work to do: Are we up for it?
 1. Sermons that have depth & based on Gospel & Old Testament.
 1. Being willing to try changes even those not initiated by us.
 1. Meals on Wednesdays & Thursdays are great community outreach opportunities. I'd love to see more people coming to our table.
 1. Remembering our history including specific events and groups.

Engagement Board 4: What challenges are limiting Our Saviour's ability to grow?

6 community/2 volunteers/2 conversations.

1. More community outreach is needed. People out there to show how welcoming and fun our church is!

- 2. Welcoming to all.
 - 3. To show love we need to find ways to welcome all people including LGBTQIA+ and skin colors.
 - 4. Showing the feeling of welcome to all. We are allies.
 - 5. Things have changed with families & our communities making it seem futile to expect more people to attend / join church.
 - 6. People are comfortable in their own group and not seeking fellowship with new people.
- 1. Volunteers. Financial Donations.
 - 2. Not enough volunteers.
- 1. Bring MN nice and afraid of tough topics and hard conversations.
 - 2. We need honest & open conversations.
- 1. Could we add some type of signage to reinforce , “All are welcome “, outside?
 - 1. Hold out the Word if Life.
 - 1. Members are not engaged in helping the church.
 - 1. Keep the Bible in forefront.
 - 1. Seek God’s righteousness first.
 - 1. Fun & kindness.
 - 1. Music program.
 - 1. Funding for youth.

In addition to the Engagement Boards we used short survey questions to tell us about our congregation in categories in the Ministry Site Profile Characteristics consisting of Four Categories. The survey responses are set forth below.

- Our Saviours As A Community
- Our Saviours’ Leadership Style
- Our Saviours’ Programming
- Our Saviours’ Theological Perspective

WEEK 1- OUR SAVIOURS AS A COMMUNITY

Formal or programmatic	Informal and spontaneous
118	28
Clearly defined goals and plans for the future	No stated goals or plans
111	65
Racially and economically diverse	Demographically homogeneous
54	72

WEEK 2- OUR SAVIOURS' LEADERSHIP STYLE

Welcomes ideas that are thought provoking 53	Prefers ideas that are tried and true 50
Relies on leaders for direction when making decisions 40	Relies on group decision making 53
Has learned how to use conflict constructively 56	Tends to avoid conflict or finds conflict destructive 38

WEEK 3- OUR SAVIOURS' PROGRAMMING

Facility used by community groups 70	Facility used primarily for internal purpose 26
Trains people to minister outside our walls 59	Trains people to minister mainly inside our walls 43
Focus on Ideas & Beliefs 68	Focus on skills & Actions 31

WEEK 4- Our Saviours' Theological Perspective

Obviously Lutheran in Identity and practice 75	Less obvious about Lutheran Heritage 23
Participates in Community & Regional activities 103	Not very active in Community and regional activities 9
Focuses on Bible stories & Doctrine 72	Focuses on contemporary issues and topics 40

NEXT STEPS:

The team is beginning to work on drafts of the Ministry Site Profile so that the Congregation can review them.

Our Process will End with an In Person and Virtual TOWN HALL. Our Hope is for this to happen before the Summer Dispersal.

You can reach the transition team by:

- Reaching out to a person wearing a green transition team shirt.
- Calling the church office and ask to be contacted by a member of the transition team.
- Emailing the Transition team email oseltransitionteam@gmail.com.
- Dropping a note in the suggestion box at the information desk.

Blessings in Christ, Your Transition Team