



Seeking and inviting all to become disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of our community and our world.

March 16, 2021

Dear friends in Christ,

On Sunday, February 28, Rev. Shannon Sullivan shared the announcement that she would be appointed as the pastor of Trinity United Methodist Church in Frederick on July 1. This means that she will no longer be responsible for duties as associate pastor or director of youth ministry at Calvary Church. We are grateful for her leadership these past four years and appreciate the energy, passion and gifts that she has brought to the church.

The Staff Parish Relations Committee met on March 1 to discuss the future leadership needs of the church in light of this change. In these challenging days of the pandemic, we have learned much about what it means to be the church in the midst of disruptive change. We will want to have a staff that will be creative, flexible, willing to learn and serve in new ways, and most of all passionate about welcoming all people with the love of Christ and making disciples for the transformation of our community and the larger world.

One of the options for the church would be to request that the bishop of the annual conference appoint a new person to serve as the associate pastor effective July 1. This has been the course often followed when previous associate pastors have moved on to new appointments. This would involve the SPRC sharing a profile and a list of hopes and needs with the district superintendent and then waiting to have someone presented to the church. The church would receive whomever the bishop chooses to appoint and the compensation package is based on conference policies. Over the years and decades, Calvary UMC has benefited from many gifted and capable associate pastors who each brought something vital to the congregation while they served here.

A second option would be for the church to inform the district superintendent and bishop that we do not wish to have another pastoral appointment at this time. This would allow the congregation to have a greater role in creating one or more positions on the church staff, setting compensation, and interviewing and hiring persons to fill those positions. This allows the church to look for persons with particular skills and expertise that the church feels are needed at this time in order for the church to accomplish its mission in this time and in this place. We would be able to design positions and look for persons that can best accomplish the duties and responsibilities that we define. And we would also have the flexibility to create positions and change them at our discretion rather than rely on the bishop and the appointment process to provide us with a second full time pastor.

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The compensation requirements of a full-time appointed pastor are set by the annual conference and the United Methodists denomination. These include pension and health benefits, housing allowance and minimum cash salary. For 2021, the compensation package for a pastor is \$91,190. Because of her years of service and additional responsibilities she took on with the youth program, Rev. Sullivan's compensation just about \$100,000. If the church decides not to have another Associate Pastor, this money can be used for other purposes, including the creation of one or more new positions created by the SPRC based on our current need. For example, in this time when we are producing online content and relying on social media, we might hire someone with expertise in website design and online marketing, and video production. We might return to hiring a part-time youth director as we have had in the past. We also might hire someone who can work to create a marketing plan to engage more people in the community and help with evangelism. These are just three possibilities. Positions might be created for a time specific task or to support new on ongoing ministries. In short, this option will allow us as a congregation to have more flexibility and authority for creating a staffing model that will allow the church to accomplish its mission and ministry. (This can include the implementation of the five goals set out in our vision plan.)

After much discussion, the SPRC decided that the best option for the church at this time would be for us to not have an associate pastor appointed by the bishop but instead create a new staffing model which would include one or more new positions. The SPRC will be busy as it considers the leadership needs of the church, looks at our current staff and creates new positions that are best in line with our mission and vision goals going forward.

More will be shared as we go forward. In the meantime, the SPRC asks for your comments and most of all your prayers.

Grace and Peace,

Rev. Steve Larsen
Senior Pastor

Meg Winter, Chair
Staff Parish Relations Committee