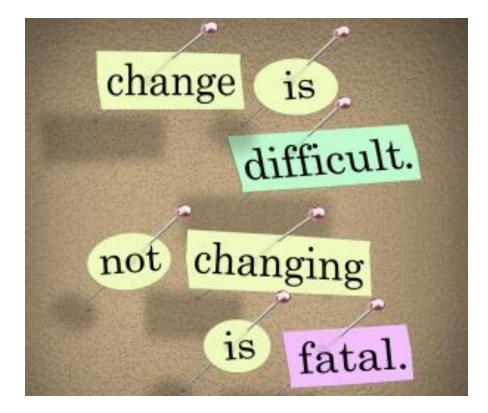
#### Eastside Lutheran Church Community: Our Collaboration Journey



#### WHY??

We recognize the decline in membership and income in most all churches.

We believe God is calling us to look for new ways to serve Him and our community.

#### Eastside Lutheran Church Community: Our Collaboration Journey



#### **VISION:**

#### Create a new organization with ELCA churches on the Eastside.

#### One body with many sites.

# Increase our community impact.

# *Improve stewardship of our resources.*

# **Options Considered**

**Informal** = Loose collaboration. Find opportunities to work together as needed.

**Merger** = Two or more churches come together to form a single church.

#### New organization (ELCC) = New

"enterprise" organization. Each participating congregation has representation. Move functions to ELCC over time.





## Our Collaboration Journey

Steering Committee with clergy and members from each congregation. More than 40 participants.

Many In-person gatherings and numerous Zoom meetings with Work Groups

Three coaches from the ELCA Synod have been assisting us in the journey.

09/2024: Identified name for the new organization:

Eastside Lutheran Church Community

#### **INITIAL ELCC WORK GROUPS**



Music: Catalogue existing music programs and resources. Seek to broaden and deepen our music ministry collectively. **Governance:** Develop an organizational structure and means to oversee its operation.

**Finance:** Identify existing finance tools and processes with the goal to move to common platforms.

Review staffing to see where there are opportunities to share resources.

**Missional Engagement:** Determine common mission partners and seek to make a greater impact together.

Look for opportunities to have members from every church to meet, worship, and live our mission together

**Communications:** Develop a communication strategy to keep all members and prospective members informed about what is happening with our ELCC.

## **ELCC Evolution**

- Draft ELCC Charter was created in 2024 outlining how we might work together.
- Charter identifies an Advisory Board with representation from all churches to further explore how we might work together to increase our impact and better steward our resources.
- Churches invited to affirm the development of the Charter and formation of the Advisory Board

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#### **ELCC: Chapter Two**

In November 2024, the Steering Committee collectively decided that it is time to form an Advisory Board to continue the discernment process.

- 1) Advisory Board takes the place of the Steering Committee
- 2) Representatives from each church in the Cluster
- 3) All congregations are invited to participate even if some are not ready to commit



## ELCC Advisory Board

- Representation from each participating congregation: Pastor, President, At-Large representative
- Responsible for managing responsibilities assigned to them by the congregations. Examples:
  - Hiring staff serving more than one congregation (Administration, Communications, Bookkeeping, etc.)
  - Contracting for services for more than one congregation (Property Management, IT Support, etc.)
  - Calling pastors to serve more than one congregation
- Identify cost efficiencies
- Develop long-term vision for ELCC

# What changes might happen in the near term?

Church Membership – no change.

**Pastors** – Each congregation will have their own Pastor(s), but the Pastoral team will minister in a collaborative manner with all churches.

**Worship** – Expect pulpit exchanges and more sharing of worship staff and resources. Pastors may serve more than one congregation.

**Staffing** – Explore sharing of administrative staffing (e.g. Finance, Administration, Communications, etc.)

#### **Changes in Governance**

#### Congregations

- Constitutions no change.
- Congregation Councils no change.
- **Congregation meetings** no change, each congregation holds elections, approves budgets, etc. as they do now.
- **Committees** no change but expect that there will be more sharing.
- Each Congregation **encouraged to support** the development of the Charter and approve elect representatives to the Advisory Board.

#### **Advisory Board**

- **Develop vision** for Eastside Lutheran Church Community ministries
- Study and recommend **opportunities for cost reductions** (share staff, equipment, quantity buying, etc.) and **joint ministry.**
- Manage shared staff if/when approved by Congregations

## How would finances be managed?



#### Congregations

Offerings – go to local churches.

**Budget** – each church still approves and manages budget.

**Restricted funds** – management stays local.

#### **Advisory Board**

Costs for shared staff or equipment must be approved by Congregation Councils and managed by Advisory Board so as not to exceed budgets approved by Congregation.

## What Happens Next?

- 1) Advisory Board has decided to meet monthly on last Thursday. Next meeting: March 27. In-person meeting on Saturday, April 12.
- 2) Advisory Board will continue to explore best practices and potential areas of partnership
- 3) Pastors to work collaboratively to serve the ELCC as a whole
- 4) Increased sharing of resources within the ELCC
- 5) ELCC Website
- 6) Development of communication strategies so all members can share input and understand our potential path forward

## Where Do You Want to Go?



