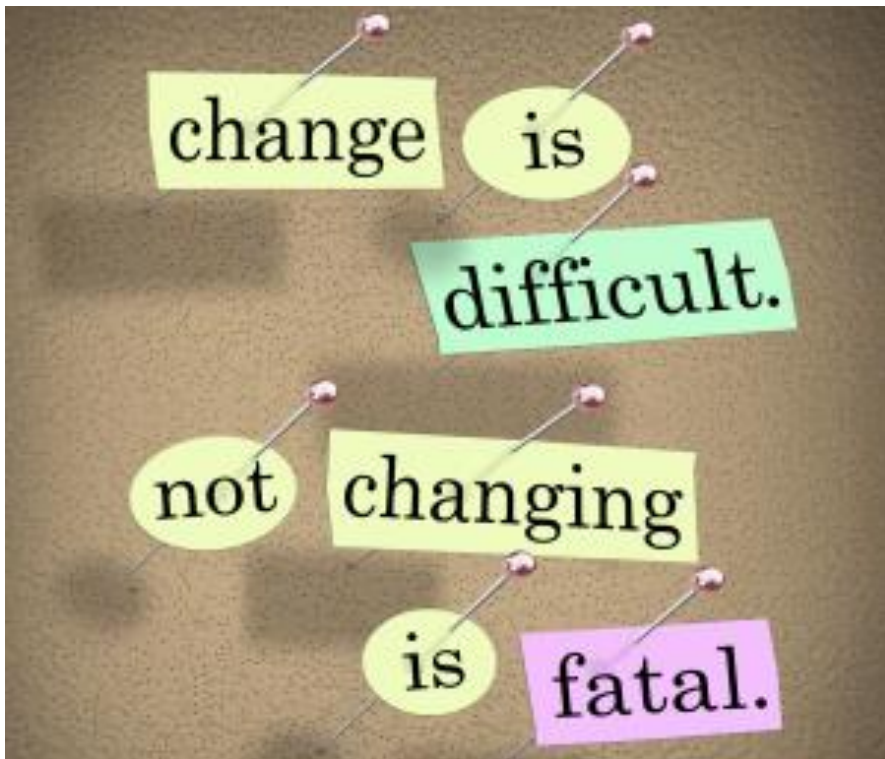


Eastside Lutheran Church Community: Our Collaboration Journey



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



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.

Music: Catalogue existing music programs and resources. Seek to broaden and deepen our music ministry collectively.

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



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

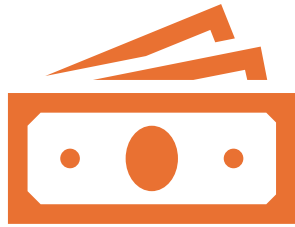
Congregations

- **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?**

