

Mutual Ministry Committee 2015 Annual Report

The Mutual Ministry Committee has continued to meet every one to three months as needed throughout the past year. In addition to regular check-ins regarding our congregation's ministry effectiveness of and general staff engagement, our focus this year has shifted away from last year's supplemental staffing concerns (supporting an intern) and more toward supporting Pastor Greg in his professional development and long term goals.

One notable development that we're excited about is that Pastor Greg is considering entering a part-time doctoral studies program. It's a unique program that allows him to delve into a deeper understanding of ordained ministry, by using his continuing experiences as our pastor, combined with readings pertinent to our ministry, and classes done on his own time (and using his Continuing Education hours). You might think of it as a theological equivalent of an Executive MBA program! Put another way that our techies might appreciate, our congregation gets to be Pastor Greg's post-graduate Lab work! This has the potential to bring new ideas and a lively exchange to our congregation and our ministry. We wish him all the best as he considers this program.

Another aspect of Mutual Ministry that our team has been working on is starting a sabbatical policy for our congregation. Given the intense nature of parish ministry, our Sierra Pacific Synod and the ELCA recommend that all congregations have a sabbatical policy that gives ordained staff some extended time away from the congregation every 7 years or so, to allow for study, renewal and refreshment. The idea is that congregations will have less turnover of their best pastors due to burnout, that pastors will come back refreshed and inspired and be more effective in their ministry, and that congregations will use the opportunity to do some reflection on their own as well, independent of the strong presence of their pastor. Our team has some documents in the works that will get us on track with this much-needed policy, subject to the approval of the Council and the Congregation, of course. We hope to bring them to you soon!

If anyone has any suggestions or concerns about our staff and our ministry, or just words of support that they'd like to share with our team, please feel free to talk to any of us! We'd love to hear from you!

Your Mutual Ministry Team:

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