

April 5, 2022

Fellow Members of the Our Saviour's Faith Community,

The Senior Pastor Call Committee is excited to share that Pastor Brian Wise was unanimously nominated by our committee, and affirmed by the Church Council, to become the next senior pastor of Our Saviour's Lutheran Church. The next step in the call process is to obtain congregational approval. This letter provides further details regarding the remaining steps of the call process, in which we invite you to actively participate.

The call committee takes seriously the holy task entrusted to us to find the right leader for our faith community as we move forward. Therefore, we have listened, considered, and valued all feedback received from you. Congregational survey responses guided our process and were used to discern in partnership with the Church Council. Again, we share the summary description on our Ministry Site Profile of the senior pastor we seek:

*"We seek a warm, outgoing pastor who relates well to all generations and will help us build a greater sense of community. Our new senior pastor will be a servant leader who recruits and empowers leaders and openly welcomes diversity and inclusion. The pastor will lead us in spiritual growth through engaging sermons and will support our ministries."*

The recommendation to call Pastor Brian as senior pastor at Our Saviour's is the culmination of our prayerful efforts to ensure that he is the right person to lead our faith community as we move forward. Pastor Brian has gone through a rigorous interview with questions shaped by our Ministry Site Profile and from continued input and conversations with members of our church community.

The work of the call committee has at all times been a prayerful process. We have prayed throughout this process for the Holy Spirit to lead us and make His way known to us. In John 16:13, Jesus tells us, "But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on His own; He will speak only what He hears, and He will tell you what is yet to come."

Pastor Brian's ministry statement that he shared with us is: *"I am called to proclaim the love and grace of Jesus Christ to all people through welcoming, leading, preaching, teaching, speaking for the silenced, and accompanying people as they journey with God. Sharing the Good News that God loves us all for Christ's sake and never leaves us. It is not what we do but what God does in and through us."*

Pastor Brian shared that his vision for Our Saviour's is to *reflect Jesus in everything we do. He shared, "Our Saviour's has a beautiful history of being innovative, invitational, and engaging with its members. We have an opportunity to explore what that could look like following this pandemic."* Pastor Brian shared that he is committed to creating a space for everyone, inviting new people while honoring the rich traditions of our Lutheran faith and church.

Pastor Brian firmly believes that *"God calls us into a relationship with one another. We can read stories of Jesus gathering and eating with his friends throughout the Gospels. I love that our worship is centered around stories of love and grace and our shared meal. I am constantly trying to find new and innovative ways to share the Gospel for today's world."* He sees value in our opportunities as a multi-site church that offers traditional and contemporary worship. He loves both worship styles and is excited to continue offering them. At the same time, he shared that many ministry areas unite us as one church and sees these as blessings and opportunities to bring multi-generations and worshipers together.

After our interview with Pastor Brian and lengthy discussions, the call committee reached a favorable, unanimous decision that the Holy Spirit was leading us to call him as our next senior pastor. Pastor Brian's relationship skills, warmth, and genuine care for others are innate gifts that cannot be learned. Pastor Brian values the whole community's input and shared that as he continues to grow in leadership, he will surround himself with individuals who can help guide him and help him grow as we do God's work together. The call committee was impressed by his love of God and love for the Our Saviour's faith community. In this time of transition for our church, he is ready to dive in and serve, learn, and meet everyone where they are on their faith journey.

### **Pastor Brian's Bio:**



*Pastor Brian is in his tenth year of ordained ministry and has served Our Saviour's as Pastor of Outreach and lead pastor at the Celebration campus for nearly seven years. Pastor Brian has created a welcoming environment of acceptance for worshipers of all ages. As Pastor of Outreach, he has built strong relationships with the preschool and used his leadership skills to expand our mission outreach programs locally and globally.*

*Pastor Brian is a graduate of Valparaiso University with an undergraduate degree in theology and a minor in music. He received his Master of Divinity degree from the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago. When Pastor Brian accepted a call to serve at Our Saviour's in 2015, he brought a background in ministry with him from another large congregation in our Synod. He also worked for the churchwide organization, the ELCA. Since coming to Our Saviour's, he continues to serve as the Ecumenical and Interreligious Officer for the Metro Chicago Synod. In addition, he serves on multiple boards that highlight his ministry strengths and is currently working toward his Doctorate in Ministry. Pastor Brian recently finished his doctoral studies and is now working on his dissertation.*

*Pastor Brian is married to his college sweetheart, Mandy. They have two children; Wesley, 5, and Gia, 2. Pastor Brian reflected with the call committee on the story of Esther and felt connected to how she was placed in a specific place and time for a reason. He shared that his collective ministry opportunities have helped him feel prepared to discern his role as senior pastor. He and his family would be honored to be invited to continue ministry at Our Saviour's. He shared in the interview that this discernment was not only about his calling to Our Saviour's but that his whole family felt connected to our church family. Should the call committee's recommendation to call Pastor Brian as our next Senior Pastor be affirmed by the congregation, the Wise family looks forward to moving to Naperville and raising their children in our community.*

You might be wondering what is next. The call committee has officially recommended calling Pastor Brian as the next senior pastor, and the council has affirmed him. You are invited to an open informal forum for conversation with him, the call committee, and the council on Thursday, April 28, from 6-8 p.m. **We encourage each member to vote before or after worship on the weekend of April 30/May 1.**

Please note the following 'Key Dates' in your calendar:

**Important Dates:**

- **Thursday, April 28:** Open forum for conversation with Pastor Brian, 6-8 p.m., Our Saviour's Campus
- **Saturday, April 30:** Congregational vote for senior pastor before and after 5:00 service at Our Saviour's Campus
- **Sunday, May 1:** Congregational vote for senior pastor before and after 9:00, 10:00, and 10:30 services at both campuses.

Thank you very much for your support and prayers during the call process.

In Christ,

The Call Committee

Susan Ferguson, Committee Chair, Graham Brenna, Secretary, Kelly Holden, Laurie May, Sam Petras, Rosellen Schuler, Burt Thomas, and BJ Okel, Council representative