

### **Leadership Gifts and Style**

Leadership, for me, is about inclusivity, empathy, and fostering growth within the community. My background as a former business owner has given me valuable skills in organization, strategic thinking, and problem-solving, which I now bring into my ministry. I believe that effective leadership is collaborative, freely sharing my gifts and encouraging others to share their gifts. My leadership style is grounded in humility, prayer and discernment, continually seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit. I strive to not only lead, but be led with integrity, respect, and a deep commitment to nurturing the faith and well-being of those I serve.

### **Aspirations for Ministry**

My aspirations for ministry are centered on creating a vibrant, inclusive, and spiritually nourishing community that draws people closer to God. Beyond the walls of the church, I aspire to expand community outreach, addressing social justice issues and serving those on the margins. My vision for ministry is one that serves as a beacon of hope and a catalyst for change, embodying the love and teachings of Jesus Christ in all aspects of life. I believe that by nurturing individual spiritual growth and inspiring collective action for the common good, we can create a community that truly reflects God's kingdom on earth.

### **Ministry Passions**

I find great joy in preaching, making the sacred stories of our faith come alive and relevant to today's world in meaningful ways. Pastoral care is a cornerstone of my ministry, providing empathy, support, and spiritual guidance during times of need. Whether visiting someone in the hospital, offering counseling, or simply being present during a difficult time, pastoral care is about being the hands and feet of Jesus to those in need. Innovation, more specifically collaborative innovation, is another passion I bring to my ministry. Collaborative innovation not only brings about new ways to be church, but it also builds relationships and empowers others to take part in ministry.



## **Ecclesiastical Council**

for

**Adam Thompson**

**Sunday, August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

**3:00pm**

**Meetinghouse Church**

**6200 Colonial Way**

**Edina, MN 55436**

## **Family**

I have been blessed to call Minnesota, and particularly Edina, my home for the vast majority of my life. Growing up as a middle child with an older brother and younger sister and being raised by a single mother had its challenges though I always had my best friend Amy at my side. Fast forward a decade and that long lost best friend (now Amanda), through a chance meeting, came into my life once again. Then, seemingly on point with the old school yard chant, first came love, then came marriage, then came baby in a baby carriage, then another baby, and then a pair of babies and a much larger baby carriage. Twenty-four years later, I am so very blessed to call them my family.

## **Education and Experience**

I was a late bloomer in the world of higher education though much knowledge and maybe even some wisdom was gained from the school of hard knocks. Higher education, spurred God's calling, while working full-time and attempting to be a half-way decent parent and spouse, came with its challenges. I began the long process by acquiring an A.A. in Communications from Normandale Community College in Bloomington, MN with expectations of transferring for a bachelor's degree. This plan, however, was interrupted by an angel or just a friend who encouraged me to apply to seminary and, low and behold, I was accepted and attended Luther Seminary in St. Paul, MN, to which I am overjoyed to say that journey is all but over.

## **Service and Community Involvement**

Early in my calling, I felt led to a program that Meetinghouse Church (formerly Colonial Church) was invested in, Families Moving Forward (FMF) is a program of Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative that housed families experiencing homelessness in church buildings around the Twin Cities. By the following year, I became the programs Congregational Coordinator for the church. Not long after this experience began, Along with Pastor Jeff and the chair of the mission's team, I went for a tour of tiny home that Settled had built as a prototype. The Settled vision was to have churches build tiny homes that would then be placed in Sacred Settlements to become homes and neighborhoods for unhoused people. The following summer, myself

and two other builders/church members, along with countless volunteers from the church and community built a tiny home in the church parking lot. Then there is Spring Fling, a free outdoor community music festival that was created out my need to fulfill an internship project in my first year at First Congregational. Complete with bouncy house, fun games, the local brewery food and drink wagon, and two live bluegrass bands, the vision was to invite the entire town and have some fun together while raising money and awareness for a mission. Spring Fling is now going on its 4 year and has raised thousands for UCC Ukraine Relief Fund, and two local Christian non-profit organizations.

## **Theological Perspective**

I've come to see the world through the lens of the Triune God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer. God, the Creator, brought everything into existence with an intention that we, as part of that creation, live in harmony and steward the world with care. God's grace, mercy, and love are gifts that we are called to share with all of creation. Jesus Christ, the Redeemer, entered our world to bridge the gap between our flawed humanity and God's perfect divinity. His life, death, and resurrection offer us a path to reconciliation and eternal life, demonstrating the depth of God's love for us. The Holy Spirit, the Sustainer, is our ever-present guide, leading us ever-closer to living in right relationship with God and each other. This understanding forms the core of my faith and shapes everything I do in ministry, encouraging me to embrace the mystery and wonder of God's ongoing work in the world.

## **Call to Ministry in the United Church of Christ**

My call to ministry in the United Church of Christ was as surprising to me as anyone. My journey began in a place of brokenness and despair, marked by personal failures and profound loss. During this turmoil, a simple, desperate prayer became the catalyst for a powerful spiritual awakening. I felt God's presence in a way I had never experienced before, leading to a transformation that touched every aspect of my life. This call was affirmed by my family, friends, and church community, who saw in me what I had been reluctant to acknowledge, that God was calling me to serve. The UCC's dedication to justice, mercy, and the belief that God is still speaking resonate deeply with me and strengthen

my understanding of what God is calling me to.