



a letter from the pastor

Beloved Children of God,

Grace and peace to you! I am pleased to have met many of you and look forward to getting to know more of you in these next weeks and months.

By way of introducing myself a bit more, I come to you from Saint Paul where I live with my husband, Rev. Andrew Tengwall, and our two sons, ages 7 and 2. I am passionate about people growing in their faith and love to accompany others on their walk with Christ. In my congregational work I love education of many kinds, especially confirmation, exploring spiritual practices, and creating worship experiences where people can feel God's gracious and loving presence, (among other things). In my personal life, I love to garden and eat veggies right from the vine, read Agatha Christie novels, and I especially love to spend time with my family at Phalen Lake, playing games and just being silly.

One of the most important pieces for us to work on together is the recommendations from our consultant, Susan Nienaber. Together with her support we will work toward the health and renewal of St. Paul Lutheran Church, grounded in God's love and grace. To that end, I invite you to join me and your siblings in Christ in the following ways:

- 1) **Pray.** Pray for the healing of the congregation. Pray to turn the congregation back over to God. Pray for the ministries and the leaders of SPLC. Join me in prayer for the congregation on **Wednesday at 1pm**. I will be in the sanctuary at that time praying for the healing and renewal of our congregation, for the ministries of SPLC, for those on our prayer list, and for whatever else comes up. I invite you to join me there for 25 minutes of prayer. If you cannot be there physically at that time, consider setting a timer for 1pm or another workable time and say a quick prayer for the congregation.
- 2) **All Church Book Discussion:** Our consultant recommends that we read ***Congregational Fitness*** by **Denise Goodman**, a layperson who went through conflict resolution in her own congregation. We will begin small group book studies after worship on Sundays in September. You can purchase the book on [AmazonSmile](#) or [Barnes & Noble](#). SPLC will purchase some copies to have available. You can sign up to participate by emailing coordinator@sharingchristslove.org. If after worship on Sundays does not work for you, please indicate that in your email. Other times will be available.
- 3) **Watch the video of the consultant, Susan Nienaber's presentation** to the congregation from July 21st. Perhaps you haven't seen it yet, or perhaps you'd like to watch it again. In it she talks about how conflict often plays out in congregations and gives us recommendations for moving forward. There will soon be more information about opportunities to watch the video.

- 4) **Consider having healing conversations.** If you feel ready to listen and re-engage in relationships, invite someone whom you perceived to be on a different side to have one-to-one conversation with you. Be ready to listen to one another and rebuild relationships.

As we move forward together, we will engage in further recommendations to recover and renew the congregation. Our main goal right now is to return to God who is our creator, redeemer, and sanctifier and to grow in healthy congregational practices.

If you would like to talk with me, I invite you to set up a time by either calling the office, 651-462-5212, or emailing me at pastor@sharingchristslove.org. I will usually be in the office Tuesday-Thursday during office hours.

I pray that you experience God's unconditional, overwhelming, gracious, abundant love in your life.

Peace to you, Pastor Sarah