

August 4, 2018

To the Prince of Peace Church Council,

Call Committee Chair Jennifer Duncan asked me to write a letter introducing myself to you. I graduated from Luther Seminary in 2012 and have experience in both a large and small congregation. My first call was as the Associate Pastor of Faith Formation at Peace Lutheran Church in Sioux Falls, South Dakota where I served for 4 ½ years. Peace is a 4,400-member congregation and I was one of four pastors. More recently I have served as a solo pastor at Living Waters Lutheran Church in Lino Lakes. I have passions for worship and preaching, working with children, youth and people of all ages, and outreach ministries.

Children, Youth and Intergenerational Ministry

In each of my roles I have worked with faith formation ministry. During my internship at Redeemer Lutheran Church in White Bear Lake I taught confirmation and worked with volunteers to combine Vacation Bible School and a musical camp the congregation had done to be VBS with a musical.

At Peace I worked with four children, youth and family staff on children's ministry, milestones, service projects, confirmation and high school ministry. We took students to the Boundary Waters Canoe Area and on a mission trip to an Indian Reservation.

A highlight of my time at Living Waters has been working with volunteers to create a new opportunity for children and families called Alive! Worship. "Alive!" stands for All Ages Learning in an Innovative Vibrant Environment. It is a short worship service with a long story time followed by stations that reinforced the story. These often included art, cooking, science, games, service projects and a digging deeper into the story bible study. We had participants from ages 1-80 and often 3 generation families. As part of Alive! Worship we did Pop Up Christmas and Easter programs. I have been invited to write a chapter of a book and speak at a Cross Gen conference in Colorado about this experience. I have also recently written a portion of Sundays and Seasons worship resource called "Let the Children Come" to make worship accessible to people of all ages.

In confirmation we added a monthly learning project or field trip to help students better understand how we translate faith into daily life. I enjoyed partnering with 5 other congregations for a week-long middle school Summer Stretch program that included service projects, Bible Study and fun activities.

Outreach Ministry

I enjoy both local and global mission opportunities as a way to meet new people and love our neighbors. While at Peace, I served on the board of Lutheran Social Services of South Dakota and Charis Ministry Partners – a nonprofit of 13 ELCA congregation that ran a mobile food pantry and other outreach ministries. Our largest outreach ministry at Peace was Necessities for Neighbors where we gave away diapers, toilet paper and other items you could not buy with food stamps to 300 people a month. We applied for and received a \$10,000 grant from Thrivent for this ministry, which we used to begin a new

ministry called Church on the Street. At Living Waters we worked with the local food shelf and women's shelter. Our biggest project was collecting warm winter gear for them at Christmas time.

At Peace we had an annual trip to our partner congregation in Haiti. People from high school through retirement age traveled together. I had the opportunity to participate three times, including preaching with a translator. When I was a member of Augustana Lutheran Church in West St. Paul I went on mission trips to Iringa, Tanzania and La Esmeralda, Guatemala and thus am very excited about Prince of Peace's relationship with Tanzania.

Background

Prior to seminary I served as a staff attorney and assistant airport director for the Metropolitan Airports Commission. We did all the behind-the-scenes business negotiations with the airlines, ground transportation, stores and restaurants at Minneapolis-St. Paul Airport. I learned a lot about managing people, projects and budgets. I am often asked how did you go from being a lawyer to a pastor. I had gotten involved in my congregation as an adult leader with high school youth, been on several mission trips and was serving on the church council. The Holy Spirit kept nudging me in that direction. I was also a member of a small group with 8 young women and one of our friends was diagnosed with brain cancer. Walking with her through that experience for nearly two years was a big part of my call to ministry.

I grew up in Columbia Heights where my parents still live. I received an associate degree from Cottey College in Missouri and transferred to the U of M where I majored in history and played flute & piccolo in the Minnesota Marching Band. I graduated from the U of M Law School and Luther Seminary. I live in south Minneapolis and enjoy walking, biking, traveling, reading, and cross country skiing.

I have enjoyed getting to know the Call Committee and look forward to partnering with you in ministry.

With God's Blessings,

Pastor Betsy