

**Galilee Lutheran Church
METeam Update March 1, 2011**

The MET Process: The Third Developmental Task: Allowing Leadership Shifts

Leadership changes occur naturally during a stable pastorate as well as during transition. You just had the election of new council members; the election was on the calendar long before you knew you'd be in the interim period right now. However, there are often additional leadership changes that happen, sometimes more unexpectedly during the interim period and as a new pastorate begins. Sometimes factors in your personal lives necessitate the need to change, in other situations a change in pedagogy, procedure or policy that predicates the change.

Almost every congregation has both active and passive members. Active members provide leadership and the majority of the financial support. Passive members participate in congregational ministries but are not generally involved in planning or running them. Both active and passive members are important to a congregation. However, membership in either category is not fixed.

Oftentimes during a pastoral transition, change occurs. Generally speaking, active members in leadership roles reflect and value the age, theology, lifestyle, pastoral style and political perspectives of the called pastor. A pastor calls people into leadership that he feels comfortable with, and people comfortable with the pastor accepted those leadership roles. Simply put, lay leaders are generally those who worked well with the previous pastor. In the midst of pastoral transition, during the interim period and into the next called pastorate, change happens. Some lay leaders are ready for change, some may feel burnt-out, while others desire to shape the future by remaining in positions of power, either to promote or resist change. Albeit uncomfortable perhaps, change in the interim period is natural.

However, there is also challenge. Sometimes the stability of the past can develop into resistance to change and a leadership group committed to the status quo. Members who have leadership potential but have not been greatly involved because they do not seem to 'fit' the leadership styles may feel disenfranchised. Likewise, in the midst of pastoral transition change inevitably occurs which often creates feelings of distress in long-term leaders. As the environment changes during the interim period, some long-time active members may feel under appreciated when the interim and/or newly called pastor does not seem to value their long-commitment to ministry in the same way the previous pastor did. It is important for the entire congregation to be attentive, to honor the long-time leaders and remain open to change as it occurs.

The interim period is marked with change. It is a time to look to the future, to examine leadership selection and how decisions are made. It is a time to empower all individuals and groups to have voice and participate in the information gathering processes of the Mission Exploration Team. The interim period provides an opportunity to learn about and explore changes in the existing leadership structures to enhance the health of the congregation.

On January 29th and 30th members of the Mission Exploration Team were affirmed. They are Jennifer Hintze, Barb Barthel, Jill Plesh, Denise Arzberger, Phil Godden, Bill Katt, Michael Olson, Dave Groth, Lisa Brooks-Raschka, Sarah Spencer, Daryl Berg and Bill Braunschweig as the Leadership Board Liaison. You will be asked to participate as the METeam facilitates the process on behalf of the congregation. Please keep the team and process in your prayers.

Submitted by Rev. Diane M Olson, Interim