

January 18th, 2018

Dear members of First Lutheran,

On Sunday, January 28th, First Lutheran will hold it's Annual Congregational Meeting following worship. All Confirmed members of the congregation are eligible to vote. Please find Annual Reports available on our website (FirstLutheranSouthington.org) under DOCUMENTS, or printed versions in the Connector.

On September 24th, we held a special congregational meeting to consider a reduction in staffing. The congregation voted to reduce the Music Director position and eliminate the salary for the Youth Director.

A second, separate, proposal was also considered: my offer to curtail my 4-year, full-time call agreement by reducing my position to part-time. Numerous members voiced their opposition to such a cutback; no one spoke in favor. Others felt more information was necessary, including an account of the responsibilities and activities of the Pastor. Voting was tabled until the issue could be considered at a later Congregational meeting, with the information in hand prior to the meeting.

I had been preparing to find an additional source of income working with real estate in order to offset lost income. However, experience and learning revealed improbability of being a bi-vocational Pastor/flipper or Pastor/real estate agent.

When Rachel Love sadly resigned to pursue a more reasonable work situation, I needed to spend additional time with her to learn processes she had developed on her own and then cover in her departure. This also required my resignation from the Connecticut real estate licensure class in which I was enrolled.

Given the expressions in favor of retaining me as a full-time Pastor and the need to faithfully re-imagen and creatively re-create ministry in a time of such fast-paced change, I am withdrawing my offer to reduce my position.

I have provided both our church's constitutional description of the role and responsibilities of a called Pastor as well as an outline of my duties and activities at First Lutheran, specifically. These can be found on the adjacent pages.

In Faith, Hope, and Love,

Pastor Joshua Rinas

Constitution, congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)

Chapter 9.

ROSTERED MINISTER

***C9.01.** Authority to call a pastor shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds vote of voting members present and voting at a meeting legally called for that purpose. Before a call is issued, the officers, or a committee elected by [this congregation][the Congregation Council] to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.

***C9.02.** Only a member of the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament who has been recommended for the congregation by the synodical bishop may be called as a pastor of this congregation.

***C9.03.** Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,

a. Every minister of Word and Sacrament shall:

- 1) preach the Word;
- 2) administer the sacraments;
- 3) conduct public worship;
- 4) provide pastoral care;
- 5) seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;
- 6) impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its communications and publications;
- 7) witness to the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad;

and

- 8) speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world.

b. Each pastor with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:

- 1) offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
- 2) relate to all schools and organizations of this congregation;
- 3) install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council;
- 4) with the council, administer discipline; and
- 5) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the ELCA churchwide organization and of the New England Synod of the ELCA.

***C9.04.** The specific duties of the pastor, compensation, and other matters pertaining to the service of the pastor shall be included in a letter of call, which shall be attested by the bishop of the synod.

***C9.12.** The pastor of this congregation:

- a. shall keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation;
- b. shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to the synod; and
- c. shall become a member of this congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the pastor shall hold membership in one of the congregations.

***C9.13.** The pastor(s) shall submit a report of his or her ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.

***C9.14.** The parochial records of this congregation shall be maintained by the pastor and shall remain the property of the congregation. The secretary of this congregation shall attest in writing to the bishop of this synod that such records have been placed in his or her hands in good order by a departing pastor before the installation of that pastor in another field of labor or the granting by the synod of retired status to the pastor.

C9.15. Under special circumstances, subject to the approval of the synodical bishop and the concurrence of this congregation, a minister of Word and Sacrament of a church body with which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially has established a relationship of full communion may serve temporarily as pastor of this congregation under a contract between the congregation and the pastor in a form proposed by the synodical bishop and approved by the congregation.

Activities and Responsibilities, Rev. Rinas, First Lutheran, Southington

Preach and teach in accord with Christian Scripture, Creeds, and the Lutheran Confessions

Prepare Biblically based sermons	10-15 hrs.
Plan weekly worship/develop liturgy/edit bulletin	3 hrs.
Prepare Biblically based Children's Time	45 min.
Coordinate use of theologically appropriate and relevant curricula and resources	
Share ELCA resources, make media available for spiritual growth	
Plan and execute teaching and programs, Lenten series, forums	

Pastoral Duties

- Baptize
 - Provide instruction/guidance for families or individuals
- Commune
 - Provide first-communion instruction
- Confirm
 - Instruct catechumenates and shape faith for faithful living
- Marry
 - Provide pre-marital counseling
 - Help couples shape their weddings

Bury

Provide pastoral care to the dying and bereaved

Lead the congregation

Lead the spiritual life of the congregation

Lead the theological teaching and witness of the congregation

Lead, oversee, and develop programmatic offerings of the congregation

Oversee and supervise

Oversee and supervise the various ministries of the congregation

Oversee and supervise the staff of the parish and their activities

Pastoral Care

In-Person Pastoral Care

Visit shut-ins

Visit the sick

Visit members in crisis

Remote Pastoral Care

Telephone pastoral care

Pastoral care via text message/facebook message/email

Communications

Website & Social Media

Write/Oversee website

Write/Oversee First Lutheran Facebook page

Write/Oversee First Lutheran Youth Facebook page

Write/Oversee congregation Google calendar

Update Twitter account

Write/Oversee e-news publication

Print Publications

Write/Oversee weekly bulletin, including liturgy and announcements

Write/Oversee monthly newsletter

Write/oversee daily-weekly dual message marquee sign

Oversee/execute weekly bulletin printing

Oversee/execute weekly e-news printing

Oversee monthly newsletter printing

Oversee distribution of quarterly "Christ In Our Home"/"...."

Oral announcements

Coordinate/execute announcements within worship

Coordinate/execute announcements at Caring & Sharing Luncheons

Relate to, assist, guide, and coordinate with committees in accordance with Scripture, Lutheran Confessions, and Constitution

- Fair Committee
- 150th Anniversary Committee
- Worship and Music Committee
- Caring and Sharing Committee
- Finance Committee
- Property Committee
- Executive Committee
- Congregation Council
- Christian Education Committee
- Parish Life Committee
- Safe Church Committee

 - Administer our program, policies, and background checks

- Altar Guild

- Covenant to Care

Shepherd youth and children

- Work with Youth Director/Youth Committee

 - Provide engagement and instruction in worship during Children's Time

Oversee/Execute special projects, e.g.:

 - Reformation Bookstore, addition of new front sign, collecting demographic information, chalk board wall in connector, etc.

Relate to visitors and prospective members

Participate in the community

- Serve on the STEPS Advisory Board representing the Religious Sector

- Serve as the auditor of the MANNA Fund expenditures

- Serve in leadership on the Southington Interfaith Community Association

- Lead funerals for those without current religious affiliation through Plantsville Funeral Home

- Lead and host community services and activities, e.g.:

 - Anti-Racism Demonstration, Blue Christmas Service, Thanksgiving Service, CROP Walk

 - Preach and preside in convalescent homes, such as Luther Ridge in Middletown

Monitor the property, indoors and out, for safety, needed repair, and aesthetics

- Arrange furnishings, materials, etc.

- Delegate or make repairs

- Monitor lights, appliances, timers, and thermostats

- Arrange furnishings, materials, etc.

- Delegate or make repairs to the parsonage, inside and out

