



Dear Congregation,

This fall marks the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation, which we will celebrate in numerous ways in our life and worship together as a church. The motto of our Reformed branch of the Christian family tree is “once reformed, always reforming.” This means that we are continually open to how God wants to form and re-form us, both as individuals and as a faith community, and we are committed to following God’s vision and call to faithful discipleship.

With this Reformation theme in mind, what does God want to do next in and through us? What is waiting to be born in our life and ministry together? These questions have been guiding the Ministry Development Team since January when it was created by the Session. The purpose of the team is to lead a discernment process at FPCY to determine the next steps for our ministry as we listen to the many ways God has touched our lives already and worked through us to connect with the world.

A bit of history: Our church and its ministry have been growing. Three years ago, we began running out of space on Sunday mornings for our Sunday school classes and study groups. At the same time, the number of Bible studies and discussion groups has grown during the week. Over the past four years, our youth ministry has been re-visioned and is well underway with a new plan to build a sustainable program that more fully integrates youth and their families into the life of the church. Our Food Pantry has shifted to a full-choice model of food distribution as a way to more fully recognize and honor the dignity of the people who receive food. Our mission and service opportunities continue to grow through Noontime Meal, Midnight Run, and both local and international mission trips. Our love of food and our work on food-related ministries has developed in new ways in concert with our Green Faith certification process.

All of this energy, activity and growth has challenged us to re-evaluate our ministry, our space and our resources. In 2016, a Building Space Audit Team (“the space cadets”) reviewed, recommended and realigned our space. However, this audit also led to bigger questions and concerns about not only our facility, but more importantly, our vision for the future of our church and where God may be leading us next.

From all of this, two priorities have emerged as the focus of the discernment for the Ministry Development Team: Faith Formation and Food Justice. There could certainly be more, but these two capture the energy we see in the church right now. The Ministry Development Team is meeting with commissions, committees, and gatherings of people to reflect on the breadth of our ministry around these two priorities and what could be next. The MDT will offer two congregation-wide opportunities to join in this conversation on Sunday, October 29 and November 5 at 12:15 pm right after the second service. Lunch and child care will be provided. Our belief is that together we can discern what God is saying and what is waiting to be born in our ministry.

We are in a great place as a church. God has been generous, and we have been faithful. We have a wonderful and important opportunity to build on the gifts and blessings of God in our life together. We hope you will join in both small group and all-church conversations to help us discern how to move forward into God’s vision for our church.

Two handwritten signatures in black ink. The first signature is 'Chip Low' and the second is 'Tami Seidel'.

Chip Low & Tami Seidel, *Co-Pastors*