

## **Discernment Process for Pastoral Succession**

While Pastor Steve does not have a definitive timeline for retirement, he has indicated to Council that time will mostly likely come in the next 2-5 years. For the sake of a healthy transition after such a long tenure, Council will engage the Congregation to determine a succession process so that we are prepared to act when that time comes. In essence, we are asking the Congregation: **How shall we select our next lead pastor – according to the traditional “Interim Pastor” approach after Pastor Steve retires or an alternative “Co-Pastor” approach that could begin at any time now?**

The Interim Pastor approach would begin after Pastor Steve retires. The Southern Ohio Synod Bishop Suzanne Darcy Dillahunt and Synod Staff would then assign an Interim Pastor to serve Holy Trinity from that date until, with Synod guidance, the Congregation calls a new pastor to serve at Holy Trinity. This process typically takes a year or two.

The Co-Pastor approach has, in recent years, become another viable option. In this approach the congregation, with guidance from the Bishop and Synod Staff could begin now the call process for a Co-Pastor. For the sake of pastoral and organizational continuity, the Co-Pastor would serve alongside Pastor Steve for a period of time (probably a year or two) before assuming the role of Lead Pastor at a time approved by the Congregation. Long-time members of Holy Trinity will remember that Pastor Dave Markowich and Pastor Steve became Co-Pastors to exchange pastoral leadership in much the same way.

Since the authority for discerning the approach to call its next Lead Pastor lies with the Congregation as moderated by Council, Pastor Steve will play no role in this discernment process.

### **Discernment Process**

Council members will facilitate five congregational listening sessions in the coming weeks to discuss these approaches for Holy Trinity and any other approaches that may arise. These sessions will be an opportunity for the Congregation to provide input to discern a faithful path forward. Council will then compile summary findings that will be shared with the Congregation and the Synod office.

### **Listening session dates:**

Sunday, April 19, after 8:30 AM and 10 AM services

Wednesday, April 29, at 7:00 PM

Sunday, May 3, after 8:30 AM and 10 AM services