**July 12, 2018
From Pastor Jon Rhodes**

The words from Ecclesiastes chapter 3 have always given me great comfort. Entitled “Everything Has Its Time,” the writer suggests a certain known seasonality to life, a right time for everything:

“For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to seek, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to throw away; a time to tear, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace.” (Ecclesiastes 3:1-8)

These words seem sensible and truthful; it is my Christian faith that makes them hopeful. In honoring God’s will and call, I trust that no matter what our God walks alongside us. There is also a time for the end of a pastor’s call and a faith community’s transition to a new pastor. My friends, we are indeed in a new season: the end of one call and the beginning of another. As I said, I find these words comforting. They are also difficult, challenging, and disruptive. Today I am thankful to have been called (twice), loved, supported challenged and equipped by God and the people of Our Father’s Lutheran Church. In my estimation, our next and final season together is to rejoice and celebrate what God has been doing among us for eleven and a half years, to reconcile ourselves to one another (especially for where I/we fell short), and to send each other on to our next calls. Please pray for Missy, Sam, Pete and me as often as you can in the coming days and weeks. And know how much we love you and will miss you. “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.” (Romans 15:13)

In Christ’s love,

Pastor Jon

\*\*\*

**Blessings and greetings to you from the OLFC Leadership Team!**

As you may know, Pastor Jon, Missy, Sam and Pete have been pressed with a new opportunity in their lives of ministry. They, as a family, listened faithfully to God’s direction and have elected to answer a new call outside of Our Father’s community. Pastor Jon and his family will be dearly missed, and we appreciate all the ways they have lead and contributed to our community during their ministry at Our Father’s. Our hearts will be filled with gratitude and blessing as we send them to do God’s work in a new community on July 22nd!

Our community has been listening to God and patiently doing his work as he continues to transform our lives as church. We have been blessed to not have a need for calling a new senior pastor for some time, but we are excited to have an opportunity to listen to where God is calling our community. Calling a new Pastor is a process that seems like a daunting feat and it brings with it a flood of questions including; “what’s next?”. Church leadership also has these questions and is partnering closely with the Minneapolis Area Synod on this journey. Our congregational President, Anthony Wold, has been in discussion with an Assistant to the Bishop, Craig Pederson, to understand the process of calling an interim Pastor for Our Father’s community. Rev. Pederson has been invited to council meetings in the weeks ahead to assist us in preparing for an interim Pastor as they will journey with us as a faith community through transition and growth as we work towards calling a new Senior Pastor to Our Father’s.

Rest assured that the OFLC leadership team is taking every step to ensure this is a stable and spirit filled journey, sustaining the work God has done in our community, and helping us to launch into a bright and exciting future!

Please know that this too is a time of transition, which means change, and it will take a little bit from all of us (especially time) before we will be able to settle into a new normal. Patience, prayers, and grace is requested for Pastor Jon, Missy and their family, our leadership team, and our community of faith during the coming weeks and months.

God’s Love and Peace!

OFLC Leadership Team

*Please join us for a special sending worship and celebration of the Rhodes Family’s time with us on Sunday July 22nd. Worship is at 9am and a celebratory meal and fellowship will happen immediately following.*