



**BETHANY**  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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April 17, 2019

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

I'm writing to let you know about new developments at Bethany. In light of a few recent staff transitions, our Personnel Committee and I began to ask "Does God want to do something new in our staff structure?" Over the past few years we had already begun to dream of a full-time associate pastor. And, as time would have it, Danielle Merseles, our Director of Student Ministries, recently completed the Presbyterian ordination process.

After a lengthy period of prayer, discernment and waiting, Session voted at its April 9 meeting to make a change to Danielle Merseles' position. As of July 1, Danielle will be our Associate Pastor for Youth and Young Adult Ministries. She will be ordained at Bethany following her examination on the floor of presbytery. We're excited about this new phase for Danielle and for Bethany.

This will be a different kind of pastoral relationship with Danielle than you may be familiar with. In Presbyterian language it is called a Temporary Pastoral Relationship, not an *Installed* Pastoral Relationship. Seattle Presbytery encourages this kind of experimental/trial period. After one year, the session can renew it, or the congregation can vote at a congregational meeting to make this an *installed* permanent pastoral relationship. Such a move by the congregation to install Danielle would also require a three-fourths vote of the presbytery.

In addition, as you are hopefully aware, Pastor Lynne Faris Blessing is transitioning to her role with Urban Impact's Reconciliation Ministries in mid-August. Session has directed the Personnel Committee to hire a half-time Director of Outreach later this year. This non-ordained director will have no liturgical responsibilities and limited pastoral duties to be freed to fully devote her/his ministry to our outreach efforts.

Some of our elders and I will be hosting a Q & A event about these changes; specific date to be announced in the coming weeks. In the meantime, please read Danielle's attached letter. Session and I value the leadership Danielle has brought to our student ministries in the last three years and look forward to God moving in powerful ways in her newly ordained ministry in the next year.

In the grace of Jesus,

Doug Kelly

Pastor Doug Kelly, D. Min.

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