



**BETHANY**  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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SEATTLE, WA 98109

January 23, 2019

Dear friends,

Grace and peace to you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. I'm writing to you about an upcoming transition in Bethany's staff. When Lynne Faris Blessing approached the Personnel Committee in March 2018 to reduce her hours in order to spend more time with family as well as engage in reconciliation ministries with the Rev. Allen Belton, both we on the committee and Lynne began to wonder if God might be calling her to a new ministry beyond Bethany. In subsequent conversations and in discernment around Bethany's outreach needs, staff structure and what was tugging on Lynne's heart, the committee began to talk to Lynne about a time to conclude her work on Bethany's staff.

With Lynne's input we have framed a plan that we feel will help launch Lynne into a new call while Bethany continues its faithfulness to our outreach partners. On January 9<sup>th</sup>, the Session approved that Lynne's last day on Bethany staff will be August 15, 2019. The church will continue paying her salary and housing allowance for three months and will cover all her medical and pension dues with the Presbyterian Board of Pensions through December 31, 2019. The committee and Lynne had originally planned to have Lynne work through year end 2019. However, completing her work at Bethany in August frees Lynne to solicit financial support for her new role with Urban Impact's Ministries of Reconciliation and creates space for her to formally apply to become an official Bethany Outreach Partner while not being on staff. Please read Lynne's enclosed letter.

Lynne has brought so much to Bethany in her 15 years of ministry. We have all cherished her commitment to Jesus, passion for outreach, heart for racial reconciliation, and above all her love for us. This is bittersweet news for our congregation. We grieve the loss of Lynne as a staff person but can only wait with sweet and prayerful expectation for what God will do next in Lynne's ministry. We look forward to seeing Lynne, Jim, Kyra and Will on Sunday mornings as they remain a part of our church family.

Session will be calling a congregational meeting in late spring to request that Seattle Presbytery concur with the request that Lynne's pastoral relationship conclude August 15<sup>th</sup> and to approve her closing terms of call. A committee of Elders and the Personnel Committee is being formed to examine Bethany's future staffing needs for our Outreach Ministry. We have plenty of time to celebrate Lynne before she begins her season of new ministry. Please join us, our Elders and the entire staff in expressing our gratitude to Lynne and praying for a successful new ministry.

Sincerely,

Mig Schaaf, Personnel Committee Chair