



9 June 2022

Dear Members of Christ Church:

As many of you may know, for the past several years there have been substantial issues within our beloved denomination, The United Methodist Church, dealing with questions of authority, doctrine, the role of bishops, local church properties, human sexuality, church unity and more. While many had hoped that these concerns could be addressed by means of a protocol that was to be presented to the 2020 General Conference, because of the pandemic that meeting has yet to occur and now has been set for the spring of 2024. Not wishing to wait, however, some within the broader church have chosen to disregard or violate portions of our shared understandings as embodied in our written covenant, *The Book of Discipline*, creating a dilemma for everyone.

While we have largely been able to leave aside these concerns here at Christ Church, circumstances are now bringing this to the forefront of every congregation's attention. To understand the issues and options better, thus, we approved last fall the formation of a small group that could help interpret and guide us into the coming season. The Jeremiah 29 Task Force consists of fifteen members drawn from across our congregation. So that it may be indeed lay-driven, I am the only staff member on the task force, though other pastors have been invited to share their perspectives. Those lay members are:

Bob Ayers (vice-chair)	Barbara Burnham	Ken Crouch	Sunday Coffman
Sue Fredrickson (secretary)	Sarah Jowell	Gail McClendon	Joey Moreland
Jim Rose (lay leader)	Bill Stoltz (chair)	Jeff Thomas (council chair)	
Liz Williams	Tom Young		

In order to more accurately understand and interpret all of the factors involved, the Task Force recommended to the Church Council on June 5 that our congregation enter into a season of study and discernment, and the motion was approved by the council. The Task Force will now work to design what that process should look like (town hall meetings, information sessions, small group discussions, private and corporate prayer times, videos, mailings, etc.) and expects to present this process to the congregation in late summer or early fall after vacation season when many of our members are away. In the meantime, we covet your continued intercession both for our denomination and for the best future for Christ Church as a home for all.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact myself or any of the members of the Jeremiah 29 task force and we will do our best to answer them. We have established a specific email at j29@christchurchsl.org to receive your comments, and there will also be a new page on our website for the Jeremiah Task Force that will be active soon.

Christ Church continues to have a bright future ahead as we serve both God and others and I am grateful indeed for the role that each of you so beautifully play in that work.

Wishing you every grace,

C. Chappell Temple
Lead Pastor