



Hello, St. Timothy Lutheran Church! I am overjoyed to have been called to be your pastor. My road to ordination has been a long and winding road. For years, I did ministry both in the church and out of it. Finally, in 2012, enough

people had asked me when I was going to pursue ordination, that I started to take it seriously. I had no idea the journey that would be.

To be ordained in the ELCA, a person has to write essays clearly articulating their call story, theology, and answer personal questions. I started my journey in the Northern Texas Northern Louisiana synod. I submitted my first essay and had a subsequent interview. I did that again to be endorsed for internship. And, finally, a third time to be approved for ordination. Along with all of that, a person must pass psychological evaluations, seminary faculty evaluations, and earn a Masters of Divinity.

The amazing thing, is that even going through all of that, does not guarantee someone to be ordained. The final step is a call to a local congregation. I have been waiting for that since March of last year. A combination of COVID and other complications left me in limbo waiting for this final step. By voting to call me on January 17, you have made this a reality. Thank you!

Of course, my call to be your pastor isn't the end of the road, it is the beginning of a new relationship. Change can be so very hard. Already in 2020, we have all experienced a lot of change. Now we have this new relationship to navigate. Although, I am already hard at work reaching out to parishioners – getting to know what you care about, what you miss, what you love, not even all my best efforts would be enough to return everything to the normal you knew a year ago.

Some things we will revive. Some things we will have to grieve. And some things will be new and exciting. As I move into this new role, I am mindful of Jesus's words in Mark 2: 22, "No one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise, the wine will burst the skins, and the wine is lost, and so are the skins; but one puts new wine into fresh wineskins." You are not the same as any church I have served. I am not the same as any pastor you have had. We have an opportunity to be new wine in new wineskins together.

The ELCA, Trinity Lutheran Seminary, myself and my family have all worked hard to prepare for this ministry that we will do together. I am a bundle of strengths and weaknesses – all of which I offer in service to you. On the 21<sup>st</sup> of this month, I will be ordained by Bp. Traci Bartholomew in the sanctuary of St. Timothy's. Fortunately, the entire service will be streamed on Facebook, so that all of you can participate virtually. Please pray with me and for me – as I will be doing with and for you all as we begin this new relationship together.

In the love of Christ, Kimberly