



**Delaware-Maryland Synod**  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

The 24th Sunday after Pentecost  
19 November 2017

Dear Friends at Our Saviour's,

*Grace, mercy and peace to you and those you love from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

After having visited Our Saviour's a number of times this year, and having placed Vicar Joshua with you; I came to meet with the congregation on October 28 to discuss the current impasse that we find ourselves up against with the deterioration of the education wing roof.

As many of you know, that conversation on October 28 yielded some movement:

- + Consent was given to advance the process of selling the property – the whole property, parsonage and church, as is.
- + Consent was given to ask for Synodical Administration, which the Synod Council approved on November 11. In essence, the Council will be dissolved in December and the Synod Council will appoint a Board of Trustees to care for the congregation and its assets in this transition.
- + A straw-poll of 17 people yielded that 8 people are interested in pursuing merger with another congregation or worshipping within another congregation's facility (and there was division within the 8 regarding that) and 8 people who wish to give thanks for the ministry we've shared and go separately into the future. One person said they were "all in" until the building sold, but then was going to attend a congregation closer to home. We will call for an official meeting once the building has been sold and the arrangements for decommissioning have been completed.

**On December 17, the last regular Sunday morning service at 141 Lavern Avenue will be held at 10am.** I will preach and preside with Vicar Joshua assisting. At the conclusion of worship, we will give thanks for the ministry of the congregation. Afterwards, there will be a luncheon in Gohl-Brown Hall. I will provide fried chicken and cake, we will arrange drinks, as well. You are invited to bring a dish to share.

**On December 24, the last service will be held in the Lavern Avenue building.** Christmas Eve Worship will be offered at 7.30pm. At the close of worship, we will process quietly into the night carrying our lit candles – the Light of Christ – back into the world.

By December 17, I will be ready to announce the appointed Trustees and the beginnings of a plan for how to begin the process of conserving the treasures of this ministry. We will share how folks can lay claim to some of the personal treasures of Our Saviour after the ELCA Regional Archivist determines what is of archival value.

*...more*

Our Saviour, Lansdowne

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After the sale of the building is finalized, we will regroup and see how we might move forward to ensure that the outreach ministry of The Little Cathedral in Lansdowne might be continued.

I share the grief that many of you are feeling in this time of sudden transition. Though I've only been a part of Our Saviour's in a peripheral way these last 16 years, it was here that I found faith, hope – and love, too.

*For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. – Jeremiah 29.11*

With my love and prayers,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bill Gohl". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

The Rev. William (Bill) Gohl, Jr., Bishop  
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WJG/ejr