

FORWARD *Together*

WHAT COMES NEXT?

If you've been around Good Shepherd for any length of time, you've probably heard the phrase that we are a "grass-roots" church. Some of the ministries that are pillars of our community started because a few members of our staff and congregation saw a need and stepped up to fill it. I love that we are that kind of church, and when I hear the vision for *Forward*, I see an opportunity for us to continue in that same shared identity.

When I sit in the meetings and see what the renovations of our building will look like, when I hear about the impact Good Shepherd makes around the world, when I celebrate with families during faith milestone moments, I'm reminded of the "why" behind what we do, and the "why" behind this particular generosity initiative.

We have a long history of pastors who have been able to set compelling vision for our congregation, and that's a heritage that I was humbled to step into when I was ordained at Good Shepherd just a few weeks ago. Luther Key showed up to a quiet farm community called Naperville and gathered people together. Sig Berg saw that there was an opportunity for growth that our building at the time wouldn't support. He boldly led our congregation to sell their building and move into an abbey for a season. Greg and Gary stewarded us through decades of growth, new initiatives, and new ministries. Tara Beth has helped bring us back to moving in the same direction. Yet all of those pastors would tell you that they didn't do any of that alone.

It takes the Spirit of God moving in all of us. Together.

By now you've probably read the vision from Pastor Tara Beth. You've probably looked through some of the financial information. You and your Life Group might even be going through the discussion guide written by Pastor Pamela. All of that is helpful information, and has the potential to be a critical tool for our collective discipleship, yet it requires all of us to be willing to lean in.

As we check in on our generosity initiative so far, it's a good time to ask: **What is your role in this *Forward* vision?** How can you, in this moment, in the ways God has gifted you, help Good Shepherd move *Forward* together? That might look like taking a moment to sign up to serve somewhere and help participate in making our ministries happen. It might look like joining a Life Group, or helping to start a new one!

For each of us, it should look like filling out a commitment card. I know that many of you joined my husband David and I as we filled out a card last fall. As part of our mid-initiative check in, we're asking each of you to fill one out again because I believe that this is a moment that requires participation from all of us. God

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might be calling you to remain faithful to your financial commitment from last year or He might be asking for a different level of investment in a new season. There is value in the practice of returning to our previous commitments to continue making space to listen to God.

If you are someone who calls Good Shepherd home but you haven't filled out a card yet, now's the time to prayerfully discern completing that step during this series. Forward is about all of us moving together as a church into a new vision for how we are gathering at 1310, reaching our neighbors, and impacting the world. **What is your role in this *Forward* vision?** By filling out that card, by serving, by joining a life group, you're committing to the next season of this community. I believe that all of us have a step to take at this moment, leaning in with expectation of what God is going to do in our midst.

I'm so grateful to be a part of this journey with you. Let's keep moving Forward Together,

Pastor Elisabeth Lectka

