

Colonial Church Family,

Before beginning, we want to thank John Seaberg for his service to our congregation as Moderator. We are each more than our worst moments, and we recognize the courage required to serve in this unique season of our life together. Both Barb and John remain beloved members of our community as we look to the next chapter.

As John Seaberg referenced in his resignation letter, we find ourselves in a crucible moment in the life of our congregation. Throughout considering changing our name, we have surfaced the essential questions facing our community.

*Who will we be as a church?*

*How do we extend Welcome, Beloved to our neighbors?*

*How do we faithfully follow Jesus in our Congregational tradition?*

Make no mistake: we will be journeying with Jesus and each other toward these questions as we seek to Be the Church for the next 75 years.

And yet - passionate as we are to pursue answers to these questions, honored as we are to be on the journey with you - we want to be honest with you about our humanness.

This Name Change process has been exhausting for each of us, hasn't it? No matter whether you're in Leadership or not, a "Yes" voter or a "No" voter, this six-month journey has carried an emotional intensity the likes of which we haven't seen for a while.

Before moving forward, we need for ourselves and want each of us to take an intentional moment to step back, rest, reflect, and pray so that we can show up from a centered and grounded place. In the coming weeks, we hope you'll create space and time to join us in that place of contemplation.

As we sit together in this crucible moment, we want to hear from you over the next two weeks, both about everything that's happened and everything that's yet to come.

As we look back, we want to better understand where everyone's coming from, both with how the process was facilitated and what reasons stood at the center of your discernment to vote "Yes" or "No".

As your Ministers and Council representatives, we have both vision and hope for this church's future. However, as we look forward, we need to hear the dreams and voices of the congregation. As we look forward, we want to hear from you as we look to partner with Jesus toward a new chapter of our story together. As we consider these essential questions we mentioned above, it's crucial that these are answers we come up with together. Because we are a Congregational community, your responses to these questions will determine where we go next.

So as we all take time in the coming weeks to rest in God's presence, review everything we've experienced, and set the table for what's next, know that we too are hopeful, hopeful because our ongoing responsiveness to God's Spirit will always bear good fruit in due time (Galatians 6:9; Matthew 13:23).

Seeking Christ Together,

The Church Council and the Pastoral Team