

## AN INTEGRATED, TEAM APPROACH TO ADULT FAITH FORMATION

### *Background*

The Search Committee has enthusiastically chosen **Rev. Jen Porter and Kyle Nolan to share the Minister for Adult Faith Formation** position beginning August 15. This concludes more than a year of discernment by Session and committees as they've listened carefully to the congregation's voice and longings for spiritual growth. Jen and Kyle sharing this position also creates a reallocation of current staff that emphasizes each of their gifts, interests, and experience.

Since the retirement of Sherrill Vore, longtime Minister for Christian Education, in 2015, Session and several committees have been evaluating our educational ministries here at Westminster. This discernment process included asking Ministry Architects (a firm with whom we worked on evaluating our youth ministry) to evaluate our children's and adult educational ministries. We found that—from young adults and old, from newcomers to our long-seasoned members—people are expressing a longing for more in-depth exploration, study, and practice in their faith.

From the discussions among the committees, Personnel, and Session, we realized that we need two full-time equivalents to lead that wide a range of programs. In late 2016, Nancy Greidanus was appointed to be our Minister for Children's Ministries, and Session continued the process by approving the Minister for Adult Formation job description [link] and appointing a new search committee. The members of the Adult Faith Formation search committee were: Kelley Barr, Jim Bottenhorn, Francisco Calderon, Lara Dengerink-Van Til, Nancy Janisch, Bruce Klein-Wassink, Larry Slager, Kathy Speeter, Amy Strand, and Ed VanderPloeg.

This committee reviewed several applicants, then **overwhelmingly endorsed Jen and Kyle's proposal for an integrated, team approach to adult spiritual growth through the lens of faith formation rather than education alone.** [link] Jen and Kyle bring complementary strengths in theological education and spiritual direction, plus experience with missions, youth, and educational models. All of this is enhanced by their relationships built in their years at Westminster. Their joint ministry will be deeply enriched by Jen's continued involvement in pastoral care and Kyle's new role in missions.

Unanimously approved by the Personnel Committee and Session, this position is funded by a five-year decreasing grant from the Memorial Trust Fund.

**On August 15 Jen will become the Associate Pastor for Faith Formation and**

**Pastoral Care** and her former mission responsibilities will be transferred to Kyle. **Kyle will become the Minister for Faith Formation and Mission**, joining the mission team led by Heather Colletto, Minister for Mission. Jen will lead the education team that also includes Nancy Greidanus. In addition, part-time middle school director **Jeremy Bork will become our new Minister to Youth** and lead the youth team. The part-time middle school position will be filled by summer's end.

The fall issue of the *Chimes* will continue this conversation. If you have any questions, please contact Rev. David Baak at 717-5544 or [davidb@wpcgr.org](mailto:davidb@wpcgr.org).