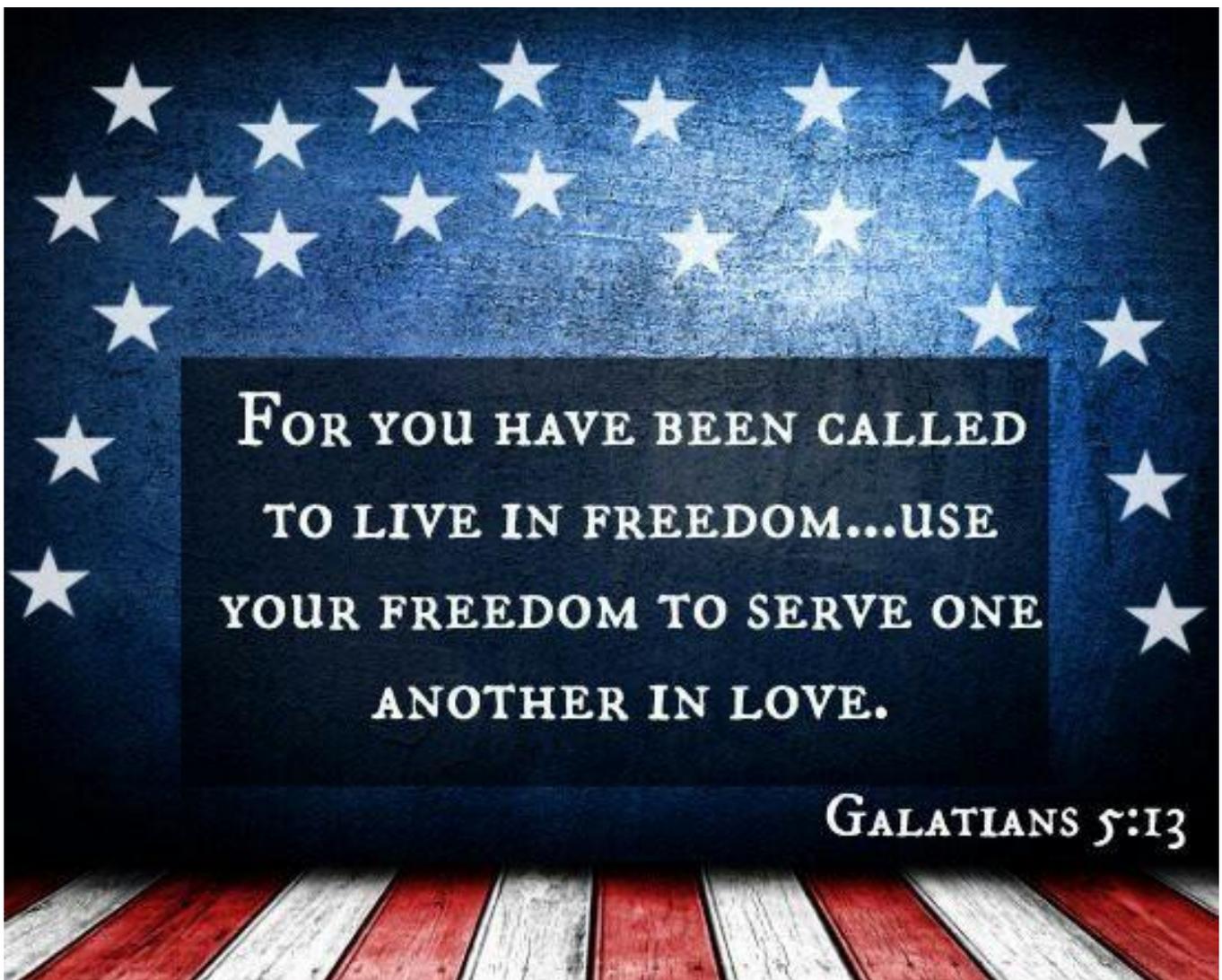




# FIRST CHURCH NEWS

## JULY 2020

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## LUMP OF KOHL

### **Where Does the Intentional Interim Process Stand?**

When you and I began the intentional interim process, we talked about working together for 12 to 18 months. But none of us saw a pandemic on our radar. In fact, the Commonwealth closed churches at the exact time that our Transition Team was going to hold its first meeting.

When the pandemic hit, I had no choice but to turn my attention to the pastoral needs of the church for such a time as this. I needed to learn new ways of keeping people connected to God and to each other. While my soul-care practices (Scripture, prayer, worship, fellowship, and partnership) have sustained me, I have been overstretched by technology and new ways of doing things. I can't explain why yet, but my workdays have seemed longer and more strenuous. I think it has to do with simply adding the weight of uncertainty to the weight of responsibility. In any case, I want you to know that I am not counting this time as part of the intentional interim process. I am viewing this time as a parenthesis of unspecified duration. While not sensing it at all, I do not wear out my welcome among you. As for my part, I'm in no hurry. I enjoy shepherding among you. I have found you to be a welcoming bunch of people. I have also enjoyed the new ministerial challenges of being in a historical church, a town

church, a congregational church. I like learning new things.

One day I sat down with 19 certified intentional interim ministers (on Zoom, of course!) and we all have found ourselves in the same boat. In our training none of us were awake for the session on leading a church through the intentional interim process during a pandemic. Actually, there wasn't one and we are all feeling our way! At the same time, we are all anxious to restart the intentional interim process as soon as possible. We just don't know when that will be. None of us knows how long the pandemic will last and how the pandemic might change the way we all do life going forward.

I have a few ideas swirling around in my head and in and out of my prayers. God willing, I will start to gather the Transition Team in late August or early September. We will meet face to face (six feet apart, of course!) if the climate of the crisis allows. We will do our best to work through the five self-studies (heritage, connections, calling, decision-making, and pastor) with one eye on the hopes that life will one day return to normal and the other eye on the societal changes the Coronavirus might make in our lives.

While none of us saw this pandemic coming, it didn't catch our God off guard. And He has a way of bringing much good out of bad. Therefore, I remain optimistic.



## July Volunteer Schedule

### ~ Lay Reader ~

7/5 – Scott Anderson  
7/12 – Christi Stille  
7/19 – Cheryl Mongeon  
7/26 – Deb Larkin

### ~ Worship Leader ~

7/5 – Scott Anderson  
7/12 – Christi Stille  
7/19 – Cheryl Mongeon  
7/26 – Deb Larkin

### ~ Deacon ~

Gigi Zepp



## August Volunteer Schedule

### ~ Lay Reader ~

8/2 – Karyn Wagner  
8/9 – Laurie Costello  
8/16 – Ginny Ekblom  
8/23 – Tom Tasker  
8/30 – Deb Larkin

### ~ Worship Leader ~

8/2 – Karyn Wagner  
8/9 – Laurie Costello  
8/16 – Ginny Ekblom  
8/23 – Tom Tasker  
8/30 – Deb Larkin

### ~ Deacon ~

Christ Stille

