



## Transitions

January 10, 2024

Lisa Heckman

My title is “Transitional Executive Presbyter”. Recently I was asked “Why Transitional?”

As we all well know, the Church is in a time of chaotic change. Some say this happens every 500 years and since it is 500 years after the Reformation, we’re due. Regardless of the truth of that, ministry that patterned itself on the Christendom or business models of centuries and decades past doesn’t fit with life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We need to rediscover what it means to be followers of Christ in community in our current time and place. Whether we want to be or not, we are in a period of transition, which was accelerated and emphasized by the pandemic.

With that in mind, the presbytery is taking the opportunity of the end of Rachel Yates’ tenure to take stock in who we are and what we are called to do. I am the Transitional EP to enable that process. I come with fresh eyes, learning what is already here, but looking for new ways of being and doing. This is a really healthy presbytery with great leadership at all levels. How is God calling us to collaboratively use that health and strength to shape and support our congregations and ministries into the future?

The first goal of my covenant contract with the presbytery reads:

*The TEP will help guide the presbytery’s leaders and congregations through a visioning and discernment process and into our next stage of ministry and life together.*

My initial “getting to know you” tasks are the beginnings of the discernment process as I see what God already has in place. Learning about the congregations, pastors, and leaders that make up the presbytery uncovers not only the good mission and ministries here now, but the needs and directions for the future. As I progress, I am and will be sharing my observations, informally at first. Soon, tho, we’ll form a Transition Team to flesh out my personal discernment into discernment and vision for us all.

I am the Transitional EP for two reasons: to lead the presbytery thru this transition and to be an intentional “short-term” EP, focused primarily on the transition and not settling into a long-term role. Being transitional allows me to be a part of the Presbytery of Milwaukee, but able to step back and think beyond what is already in place. Transitions require new ideas, flexibility, nimbleness, and the willingness for “risk-taking for the Gospel”. It is my prayer – and I hope yours, too – that God will bless all of us with the skills for this time.

Grace and Peace.

*Lisa*

~~~~~  
Rev. Lisa S. Heckman  
Transitional Executive Presbyter  
Presbytery of Milwaukee  
[lisa@pbymilwaukee.org](mailto:lisa@pbymilwaukee.org)  
cell: 607.321.4581