

In the Spirit of Renewal, the Call Committee would like to recommend

Pastor Allison Bengfort, MDiv, MSW for call to the Lead Pastor position at St. Andrew Lutheran Church.

Pastor Allison Bengfort (she/her) comes to us with a deep sense of call to develop and nurture the beloved community of Christ that welcomes and loves all, grows in faith together, shares the sacraments, and lives out its baptismal calling through acts of justice and mercy in the world.

Pastor Allison obtained a Bachelor of Arts with a religion major from St. Olaf College in Northfield, MN, a Master of Social Work from the University of Chicago, and a Master of Divinity from the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago.

She was ordained in 2018 and served her first call as the lead pastor at St. John's Lutheran Church of Wilmette, IL. At St. John's, she led a multi-year stewardship initiative that moved the congregation from a \$50,000 deficit budget in 2019 to a balanced budget in 2021. She also demonstrated her leadership skills by working with the Council and other ministry teams to facilitate mission and increase a sense of fulfillment for church leaders.

Leaving that call in the beginning 2023, Pastor Allison took a 4-month sabbatical to travel and learn Spanish, spending time in Mexico and Guatemala where she participated in several language schools. In September 2023, she moved to Portland and served as Bridge Pastor at First Lutheran Church of St. Helens from September through February.

Her pastoral expertise and strengths include:

- Preaching/Worship – Pastor Allison views worship as an opportunity to reconnect with what really matters and practice a posture of reverence and love towards God, one another, and all things. As a preacher, she uses multiple styles to connect our ancient stories with our current reality, provoking the head and the heart of the listener.
- Christian Education – Pastor Allison approaches children and youth ministry with the intent to draw out the innate spirituality, curiosity, and theological insights of the youth. It is important to her to work with a congregation that loves and values children. She also believes that education is a life-long process and that the Holy Spirit invites people of all ages to continue to learn, grow, and be transformed. As a facilitator and teacher of adult learners, she encourages people to engage not just the head, but also the heart and the hands.



- Recruit and Equip Leaders – Pastor Allison believes her role is to empower congregation members to live out their faith through the work of the church. At her former call, she led the council in changing their focus from financial and facility matters to include a focus on the mission of the congregation. This shift required equipping leaders for a new way of leading and proved to increase a sense of fulfillment for council members in their work.
- Stewardship – Pastor Allison believes that living out our values includes how we steward our money. The invitation to give is an invitation to participate more fully in the work God is doing in our community.
- Administration – Pastor Allison has led her congregations in improving organizational structure and function, establishing human resource processes, and promoting a healthy work environment. She is excited to be part of a congregation that already has such an established infrastructure.
- Community Organizing – Pastor Allison sees faith-based community organizing (sacred organizing) to be a form of discipleship. Through training and mentorship by Pastor Melissa Reed, Pastor Allison used sacred organizing practices in her former call and is currently a Leaven Land and Housing Cohort Companion.

Pastor Allison's passions align with St. Andrew's values, mission, values and will lead us on the path that we have set forth. She will bring joy as she helps us grow in faith, community and ministry while keeping the foundation of our Lutheran heritage.