Dear Bethlehem,

The council wants to update you on the process of negotiation with the Metro Chicago Synod regarding the proposed Latinx worshiping community in Elgin.

The synod has responded with a revised proposal that both facilitates and makes clear some of the ways that the new worshiping community and Bethlehem can work together. They are responding to our feedback in ways that will facilitate an eventual coming together as we envisioned. We are providing a summary of what is new here and will mail you the final proposal when we have it.

1. The new proposal adopts the name that we suggested, Iglesia de Belén, which is the Spanish translation of Bethlehem. This will certainly make it easier to merge in the future.
2. The new proposal shifts emphasis of the LatinX ministry pastor’s time to Elgin. Asst. Bishop Biekman is asking for 70% of his time to be spent in Elgin, and feels certain that he can get agreement on at least 60%. This will allow time for not only developing the new worshiping community but developing relationships with Bethlehem.
3. The revised proposal will suggest some ways that the new pastor can be involved with Bethlehem, including preaching at Bethlehem’s service once a month to both build relationships and give Pastor Carol a break. Pastor Biekman (Director of Mission for the Synod) has asked for suggestions of a couple of other ways that the new pastor can be involved with Bethlehem, so we have our visioning team working on that. This is why the proposal isn’t final today, we still get input.
4. The revised proposal makes it clear that no Bethlehem members are expected to join the new church. Existing members of Bethlehem will be invited to be on a Launch Team, and there could be a Host Team that is ongoing that helps to facilitate relationships between the 2 churches. Of course anyone is free to join the new church if God calls them into ministry in that way, but it is not expected.
5. The new proposal suggests that the Child Development Center might be an easy mutually beneficial ministry. Both church’s outreach into the community can lift up the CDC and other ministries as well.

We hope that you can take some time in the next days to attend our Bethlehem conversations on this topic. Here are some available times, some on Zoom, some in-person, weather permitting.

**Sunday** after worship on Zoom

**Sunday** in-person at 2pm on the front lawn at Bethlehem, bring a chair and a mask.

**Tuesday** in-person after the 7pm Communion service (Bethlehem parking lot), bring a chair and a mask.

**July 23rd,7pm Zoom Congregational Meeting**

[***https://zoom.us/j/95210094147?pwd=TjBTUWN4RlJlYVFOK2RmWDlsRW9wdz09***](https://zoom.us/j/95210094147?pwd=TjBTUWN4RlJlYVFOK2RmWDlsRW9wdz09)

**or Dial 1 312 626 6799, Meeting ID: 952 1009 4147, Password: 935958**

In Christ,

The Bethlehem Congregational Council