

Shades Valley Evangelical Lutheran Church

720 Shades Creek Parkway
Birmingham, AL 35209
(205) 871-3512

July 18, 2018

Dear Friends,

These are exciting times for Shades Valley Lutheran Church! I think we have all recognized, in many different ways, how richly the Spirit has blessed us in moving Pr. Eric Murray to accept our call to serve here as our pastor. He brings to us—and invites us to share—new energy, fresh perspective, and a deeper understanding of the Gospel and our call to mission.

Building on those three things, the time is right for SVLC to develop a new strategic vision to guide our ministry in the future. As you know, the Congregation Council has been working the last two months to lay the foundation for developing new strategic vision.

Enclosed you will find a synopsis of the insights gained from the Ministry Context Team. We now need your input to conduct what we are calling a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats). Here are a few ideas to stimulate your thinking:

Strengths and Weaknesses (internal to our congregation):

- Financial resources - debt or assets;
- Personnel - church staff;
- Facilities - physical plant;
- What is our reputation in the community?
- Leadership - council and pastor;
- Is there anything that keeps prospective members from worshipping with us? and
- Is there anything we do better than other congregations or is unique to Shades Valley Church?

Opportunities and Threats (external in our community):

- Demographics - changes in population and social profile;
- Economic and housing trends;
- Might changes in social patterns, population profiles or lifestyle changes be an opportunity?
- Technology related;

- What obstacles do we face? Or what obstacles will we face in the future?
- Are there other congregations that are a threat to Shades Valley Church? and
- Anything else?

Please complete the worksheet and return it to the church office, or email it to me (address below), by August 1, 2018. If you have questions about completing the worksheet you can contact Pr. Eric at the church office, or me at 205/266-1799 or stephenschrader@me.com.

This information will be compiled and used as a resource when the Congregation Council meets at Lutheranch on August 24-25 to develop the strategic vision. Following the retreat, you will have an opportunity to be involved with the next phase as the strategic plan is developed.

Today, we are roughly half-way through the ninety days of prayer to which Pr. Eric invited us on Pentecost. I hope you will continue to ask for the Spirit's guidance for our congregation and its leaders in this planning process. Thank you for your partnership in ministry.

In Christ,



Stephen Schrader
Congregation Council President