

# HOPE GROWS HERE

November 1, 2022

People of Hope:

I give thanks to God for you! After sharing in conversation and discernment with your congregation council, I am honored to serve as your interim pastor for this transition period in the life of Esperanza Lutheran Church.

My name is Sarah Stadler. I am a lifelong Lutheran, daughter of a retired Lutheran pastor and retired social worker, and grew up in Minnesota. After graduating from Luther College in Decorah, Iowa in 2001, I worked at a shelter on the west side of Chicago for people experiencing homelessness and illness—as part of a Lutheran Volunteer Corps year. I then attended seminary at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago and served my first call as an associate pastor at St. Peter Lutheran Church in Denver, Iowa 2006-2010. In 2010, I was called to Grace Lutheran Church in downtown Phoenix and just completed ministry there October 31. As the now former pastor of Grace, I am grateful to you, the people of Esperanza, for your partnership in ministry, particularly with the heat respite program and the Sunday morning pancake breakfast.

Serving as pastor is my primary spiritual discipline—which is a huge gift in my life! The gathered people of God are my meeting place with God, so thank you for giving me the opportunity to join with you in community, in worship, in preaching and hearing God's word, in service, in study, and in all that life together as God's people entails. I enjoy most aspects of ministry but am probably most fond of preaching, worship leadership, teaching, advocacy, administration, and building a sense of community among God's people.

Aside from parish ministry, I love gardening, running, yoga, meditation, reading, learning, playing piano, and spending time with family and friends. I currently serve as co-chair of the New & Renewing Mission Table for our synod, as the program director of Lutheran Campformation, and on the policy committee of Lutheran Advocacy Ministry of Arizona (LAMA). I also love volunteering at Sonoran Prevention Works which is a harm reduction agency, as a facilitator with and on the board of the Institute for Civil Dialogue, as a member of the attorney general's clergy council (on opioid overdose prevention), and in teaching piano lessons to kiddos at Iglesia Luterana Vida Nueva.

I look forward to getting to know you, to being part of the Esperanza community in this interim period, and to helping guide you through this transition. I welcome you to reach out at any time whether you are going through a time of crisis, just need to talk, have questions you want to explore, or want to put your gifts to work at Esperanza!

With joy and gratitude,

Pastor Sarah Stadler

