



April 29, 2021

Beloved OCSL Community,

On April 1st you received an email from the Board of Trustees and the Ecclesiastical Leadership Team (ELT) giving a general outline of how we would be moving forward after Rev. Jeff made his transition and discussing the ways that we were working to support the community.

This email continues in that spirit. We appreciate that, in addition to relying on principle and prayer, people need information to help deal with the uncertainty of these times.

The Board and ELT recognize that the community is in the midst of a process that can't be rushed. This begins with working with the grief and loss we have all experienced.

To support that process, we have engaged the services of CSL minister, Rev. Soni Cantrell-Smith who is affiliated with a CSL in Lexington, Kentucky. Rev. Soni describes herself as a "first responder" who helps to facilitate the healing and grief process for a community when their minister is no longer there for any number of reasons. Rev. Soni will be addressing the immediate needs of the community in several ways. She will be facilitating grief and healing work within various groups and for the community at large. She will be addressing the community during Sunday services on May 30th and June 6th and will be facilitating listening circles those days for members of the community to share their thoughts, feelings, concerns, and hopes. Rev. Soni will be working with us for about two months.

We will also be getting support from Rev. Susan Overland from the San Jose CSL who is our regional coordinator. She is available to advise and support the OCSL leadership and, in the absence of a senior minister, is responsible for the practitioners.

As stated in the previous email, the ELT was originally set up to fill in for Rev. Jeff through June 30th. The ELT, in collaboration with the Board, has worked extremely hard to keep OCSL moving forward. After June 30th we anticipate bringing in an interim minister to preside over the ecclesiastical functions until a new Senior Minister can be brought on. We will coordinate that with CSL home office. The time frame for the interim minister would likely be six to nine months.

The process for bringing in a new Senior Minister is meticulous. We begin with community visioning to get clear on the qualities we want in our next leader. We will create a search committee that is representative of the community, who will be responsible for the selection process. Then, in coordination with CSL home office, we will post a job announcement and receive resumes from interested candidates. The search committee will review the applications and work to whittle down the number of candidates to two or three. Those final candidates will meet with our community, give a Sunday sermon, and do a workshop. In the end, all members in good standing will have the opportunity to vote for the minister they want.



We know that all of us want OCSL to flourish and embrace its greatest yet to be. By prayerfully considering each step along the way we know that we will create this blessed vision together.

Peace and blessings.

Board of Trustees and Ecclesiastical Leadership Team