

Unifying for Ministry

Envisioning the future ministries of Immanuel, Shirley and Zion, Morrison



Greetings Brothers and Sisters from the
Unifying for Ministry Joint Committees!

We are grateful as we continue to discover the opportunities that potentially working together presents. The efforts being made have not only revealed many areas that God has blessed us individually but has helped us uncover the ways we can better serve both congregations and our growing communities!

With the many things being considered, our goal is to keep you informed as the work being done now will shape this ministry for generations to come. Your timely comments, questions and concerns are invaluable in this process.

“Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of others.”

Philippians 2:1-4

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A Look Back to How We Got Here

The Youth Group Connection

With the blessing of students from Shirley attending Morrison School, the friendships and connections have grown. Seeing the opportunities to keep kids connected after graduating from MZL school, the youth groups started talking. What sense did it make to separate already connected kids? Youth leaders from each congregation had a passion for helping, but their time and gifts were limited. Put together, a great Youth Team of lay leaders and pastors was assembled. Now, Bible Studies, open gyms, campfires and other engaging youth activities have been held at both campuses. Not only has it helped strengthen the youth groups of our congregations, but has drawn in youth from other congregations as well. Utilizing the gifts of lay leaders and pastors from both congregations, our youth have been blessed by allowing them to build friendships and grow in their faith together.

An Undeniable Opportunity

For years, each congregation held the idea of somehow serving the young families in our community. This proved true with the long standing, one day Fun Day Program at Morrison, but adding a full time child care program was halted by a lack of facilities. Shirley had also recognized the value, but the daunting undertaking on their own was overwhelming. Yet, both had the desire to do this work and saw the blessings for the gospel, the community, and the kingdom. The desire turned into action and, Lil' Sprouts Early Childhood Ministry (ECM) is coming together! With the combined gifts, talents and passion of members and the sharing of facilities and resources, this long and sought after ministry is coming together in beautiful ways with the Lord's guidance.

Where connections are made, curiosity grows!

With the Holy Spirit doing HIS work in the Youth Group and ECM, what else is possible? Could the two congregations, already serving together in a growing community, share the gospel message to more people while strengthening each other?

By connecting our members, leaders, and pastors in a unified ministry, we better utilize the gifts of more people and have less reduplication of work already being done. We seek God's guidance on how to be the best stewards of the gifts and talents he has given to those who work and volunteer in his ministry.

Why Shirley and Morrison?

In our rich rural community, we often refer to people who live miles away as our neighbors. We also have many personal connections between the two congregations. From marriages, grade schools, extended families and lifelong friendships, the roots at both churches are not only deep, but in many ways intertwined.

And it is that same "neighborly" culture that welcomes new folks into our churches. It doesn't take long to find someone that you can easily connect with!

Where We Are Today: Committee reporting

Committee reporting has been completed! We again say thank you to the dozens of volunteers who have been studying the various aspects of what a unified ministry could look like. As we continue to uncover all of the potential blessings from a unified ministry, we ask for God's guidance throughout the process.

Human Resources Committee

Please see your previous newsletter for the full report.

Ministry Committee

The Ministry Committee continues to report its progress. Previously, the ministry committee introduced the potential mission statement for a unified ministry. Additionally, they have reported on other areas of ministry that they will continue studying. While much of their work is focused on worship, other areas of attention have been identified. These include:

- Special/holiday services
- Bible studies, catechism class and Sunday school
- Music, choirs, handbells and band
- Outreach and evangelism
- Membership and encouraging inactive members
- Fellowship

Over the next several months, the committee will bring clarity to how these areas of ministry can be brought together.

Governance Committee

The Governance Committee was tasked with reviewing the constitutions of each of the congregations and making a recommendation for a potential joint governance.

Using formats offered by the synod and Morrison's recently updated constitution, governance proposed a unified constitution with the following highlights:

Adopt Leadership Team (LT) structure

- Eliminate nominations and voting in of candidates. Instead, vote in the team as a whole.
- Recruit qualified candidates and mentor incoming member before he takes the position
 - Provides for a seamless transition where outgoing and incoming can work side by side.
 - Allows incoming members to evaluate if he truly is suited for the position.
- Annual congregational vote approves the leadership team for the year.

Allow more opportunities for women at meetings

- Women would be allowed and encouraged to participate in voters and call meetings
- Women would be allowed to vote in non-binding or straw polls to allow voters to understand the position of the church members
 - Especially important for single or widowed women or women whose husbands are either not a member or are inactive in the congregation.

Where We Are Today: Committee reporting (cont)

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee took on the complexities of creating what would be a combined budget. Among the blessings noted is that both congregations show healthy financials, no current debt, strong reserve funds and generous designated funds. We thank God for the gifts from our members and the skills of our financial teams.

Important highlights from the Finance committee:

- Following a \$15,000 start up contribution from each congregation, we anticipate that Lil' Sprouts will remain financially independent.
- Over \$250,000 annual revenue is provided to Lutheran Elementary School (LES) from tuition dollars and the Wisconsin Parental School Choice Program.
 - What is the Wisconsin Parental School Choice Program? This program covers the **full** cost of educating students of qualified families, greatly reducing the obligation of the church to support the school. This incentive allows families to enroll in a school they may otherwise not be able to afford. The LES has utilized this program for 5 years.
- If unified, members will still be able to designate funds to specific purposes at individual campuses.

School Committee

The School Committee took an overview of the current Lutheran Elementary School (LES) and also explored potential connections that could be made with the Early Childhood Ministry (ECM).

In evaluating the current LES, these staffing considerations were identified:

- Additional Secretary to help with online posting and possibly assist the ECM
 - Note: This need was also identified by the HR Committee
- Additional part-time teacher to assist with admin release time
- Will there be a need for a 4k teacher call at the Shirley location?

In relation to the ECM, the committee discussed ways to involve unchurched families with the churches and the LES. This could be done with kids singing in church, family chapel services and including the ECM kids in the LES Fortress Groups. They also discussed the importance of Pastor to Parent connections.

Properties Committee

The Properties Committee surveyed both properties and evaluated upcoming needs for the next 3-5 years. Since both campuses have projects that will need attention in the next year, the focus was longer term. Some gifts have been collected towards these projects.

- Shirley Campus' larger upcoming need is to seal the church parking lot.
- Morrison Campus' needs also included sealing the church parking lot and installing lighting. Other items discussed included removing the barn at the teacherage (located across the road from the school) and adding a larger garage to the parsonage (located between the church and school.) The current garage would also need to be removed. A fellowship hall including accessible restrooms to the west of church was also discussed.

Summer Worship Trial: June 1-August 24

At the March 24th Joint Committee Meeting, the Ministry Committee made the recommendation to consider a summer service trial between Shirley and Morrison. This recommendation was given to each church leadership. Respectively, on April 27 and May 4, Morrison and Shirley voters gave support to the summer service trial.

<p>Sunday Services 8:00 AM at Morrison 9:30 AM at Shirley *Communion on the 2nd and 4th Sundays</p>	<p>Thursday Services 7:00 PM at Morrison May 29-July 3 7:00 PM at Shirley July 10-August 21 *Communion on Thursday <u>preceding</u> the 2nd and 4th Sundays</p>
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Special Services

Thursday, July 3-Outdoor service at Morrison 7:00 PM

Sunday, August 10-Lil' Sprouts Installation and Open House at Shirley 9:30 AM

Sunday August 24-Joint Outdoor Service and Cookout at Morrison 9:00 AM

Bible Study: All are welcome to join Bible Study! Several opportunities are offered.

† Sunday 9:25 at Morrison

† Thursday 6:00 preceding 7:00 worship

† Thursday 3:00 at Shirley

† Possible small group studies

Offerings: Each church member has assigned envelopes that can be used at either church. Those envelopes will be returned to the appropriate church. Loose donations put in baskets will remain with the church it was donated to. Direct deposit is also available.

Communion: Members are welcome to commune at either church. Communion sign ups for each church will be available at both locations. Pastors and ushers will guide communicants through the communion process. While individual cup is offered at both campuses, common cup will only be available at Morrison.

Livestream and Radio Service: 8:00 AM Morrison service will be live streamed on both church's YouTube pages with links on both church's Facebooks pages.

Parking lot radio service is available at Shirley. Tune in to 104.7 FM. Communion is also available in car.

Outdoor Services: Weather permitting, outdoor services are held near the pavilion and gazebo between Morrison school and church. Park at the church parking lot with school parking lot overflow. Bring your own chair and enjoy worship in the sun or shade.

Seating is also available under the pavilion for those not wishing to bring a chair or for those less mobile. Parking next to the pavilion is also open for those who wish to worship with open windows from their cars.

Get To Know The Pastors

Pastor Dave Ruddat

Family: Kelly (nee Dobberpuhl) Isaiah, Lillian, Elijah, Ricky, Emeline, Rosemary

Hometown: Collins, Wisconsin

Years in ministry: 21 **Years at Shirley:** 8

Hobbies and interests: While I have done hunting and fishing in the past, my current hobbies are playing board games, listening and producing podcasts, dusting off my cello, and helping my teen drivers keep their cars from falling apart.

One thing that surprised you when you took the call to Shirley: I never thought I could live in the country and only be 9 miles from Culver's.

Fun fact: Born with hearing loss, I intuitively learned to read lips in order to understand people, but it still is a struggle. If you watched "Bad lip reading" videos on youtube, welcome to my world.

Pastor James Enderle

Family: Jen (nee Draeger) Isaiah, Onycha, Elisha, Kyriea

Hometown: Lee's Summit, MO (suburb of Kansas City, MO)

Years in ministry: 14 **Years at Morrison:** 6

Hobbies and interests: I love to learn and understand culture and history and how Christianity connects (apologetics). I enjoy my family, travel, sports, music, movies, and exploring good food & cultures.

One thing that surprised you when you took the call to Morrison: Growing up in Missouri and coming from ministry in Asia I didn't think I'd have many connections to a country church in Wisconsin. But there are so many connections that Morrison has to World Missions, including good friends Jon and Kim Bare and family, former coworkers in Asia.

Fun fact: I climbed the peak of an active volcano in the Philippines and was scuba diving in waters with black lava rock the day before.



What's ahead?

While much work has been done, some areas still need refining. As committees are in this process, it is the perfect time to ask questions, make suggestions or voice your concerns. In the fall of 2025, several presentations vision of the unified ministry vision will be offered at joint open forums. Each congregation will then vote on if to move to PHASE III: EXECUTING. If passed, the envisioning done by the committees can start to be acted on. The process of actually unifying will likely take several months to a year. What you can expect is for it to be a process, and as always, your questions and concerns are always welcome.

Finally, how are you?

We, as the Unifying for Ministry Committee chairs and members, acknowledge there are many views on what these proposed adaptations mean. Some folks are very excited to see the two churches *finally* working together. Others understand the need but also like what they are comfortable with and may be unsure of what is ahead. And still others may be fearful, angry or saddened. *We acknowledge each of you.* You are our brothers and sisters in Christ. With that, if you are struggling yourself or with someone you care about, we are also here to listen.

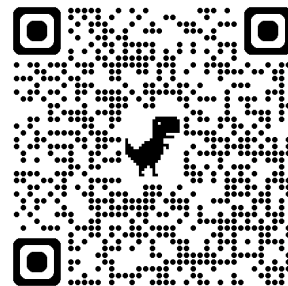
Your feedback is important!

We appreciate your timely questions, concerns and comments. No question is too trivial. No respectful concern is unimportant. Our goal is to keep you informed! We are offering lots of ways to connect with us:

- Scan the QR code or submit a question to the executive team [online](#).
- Fill out a paper form offered at each church and place it in the marked boxes.
- Use the provided contact list to reach out to a committee chair.
- Speak with Pastor Enderle, Pastor Ruddat, Kris Scheider or Nick Dobberpuhl
- Watch your mailboxes and announcements for summer open forums

Serving Christ, The Executive Council

Nick Dobberpuhl- Shirley Co-Chair
Kris Scheider- Morrison Co- Chair
Randy Loppnow- Morrison Church President
Mark Matthies- Shirley Church President
Pastor Dave Ruddat- Shirley
Pastor James Enderle- Morrison
Kurt Vosters- Morrison
Dale Dobberpuhl- Shirley
Chris Kuckenbecker- Shirley
Tony Tasch- Morrison
Charles Edinger- Morrison
Dave Zeamer- Shirley
Joel Dobberpuhl- Morrison
Jake Geidel- Morrison Principal



Morrison Zion Lutheran Church
Immanuel Shirley Lutheran Church

Unifying for Ministry

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Envisioning the future ministries of
Immanuel, Shirley and Zion, Morrison

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(920) 864-7787

Address Service Requested

Website: www.mzluth.org
www.immanuelshirley.com

Pastor: James Enderle
james.enderle@mzls.org
(920) 949-1038

Pastor: Dave Ruddat
pastor.ruddat@gmail.com

Join us this summer!

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