



Greetings,

Thank you for visiting St Luke's website. I'm Dwight J. Friesen and I am the pastor of this dynamic Bellevue faith community. I'll offer more of a personal introduction in a moment, but first let me offer a word of explanation about the unique adventure St Luke's is on.

On January 23, 2022 this church commissioned its pastor to embark on a pilgrimage, together with his partner & their three children. This church commissioned its pastor to serve as the village pastor at Holden Village in Eastern Washington. So, we are in the midst of an unconventional 19-month exercise of faith. In a sense, Pastor Mark and his family are "on loan," and then, at the end of August 2023 the family will return with Pastor Mark resuming his pastoral leadership here at St Luke's... So, while Pastor Mark is serving at Holden Village I am serving as part-time Pastor at St. Luke's

My full-time calling is as a practical theologian, training missional leaders at The Seattle School Theology & Psychology. And that means for the time being, I teach full-time at the seminary and pastor part-time here at St Luke's.

I've been a Bellevue resident since the 1990s and reside in its Lake Hills neighborhood, together with my partner of over thirty years. Together we have a son who recently moved into Seattle's Capitol Hill neighborhood. I was born and raised in the prairies of Canada, in Brandon, Manitoba. I love the visual arts, poetry, and music of all kinds... especially jazz & blues. I've really missed live shows during the pandemic. I enjoy cooking, a good single malt Scotch and sitting by a fire in conversation with friends and a good cigar. I'm an avid reader, love a good film, enjoy stand-up comedy, and international travel.

In terms of prior ministry, I have served or pioneered congregations in Brandon MB, Calgary AB, Billings MT, and Bellevue WA, before completing my doctoral studies and shifting my energies to theological and missional education. While I am not ordained in the Lutheran tradition, our Synod's Bishop has authorized me to preach and preside for this unique season.

In addition to my leadership development work at the seminary, I was the faculty director of the "Leadership in the New Parish Certificate," co-founder of the Inhabit Conference, a founding board member of Parish Collective, and I serve internationally with the Urban Shalom Society in service of United Nations-Habitat. I served on the National Council of Churches' "Faith & Order Commission" and until taking on this role at St Luke's regularly consulted, coached, and spoke to leaders, local

churches, regional denominational groups, and independent alternative parish expressions from a wide array of Christian traditions.

I love to write and have authored or co-authored numerous books including: *2020s Foresight: Three Vital Practices for Thriving in a Decade of Accelerating Change*; *The New Parish: How Neighborhood Churches are Transforming Mission, Discipleship, & Community*; and *Thy Kingdom Connected: What the Church can Learn from Facebook, the Internet & other Networks*. I even blog occasionally, on my personal website: www.dwightfriesen.com

The deep goal of my life is to know love. To love freely and to receive love. I often describe my personal quest as a longing to discover and practice a life of faithful presence. While I describe my ministry calling as discovering, learning from, and equipping leaders for the church emerging after Christendom.

I am thrilled to be part of the unfolding story of St Luke's faith community. Birthed in 1957, this church has quite a remarkable story of creative ministry, as it seeks to be a community of refuge, renewal, and reach.

Part of my role while I am here is to ask questions enabling collective listening and learning about St Luke's unique identity, to explore some of the ways the church's neighborhood and the city of Bellevue are changing, all the while wondering together what the Spirit of God might be inviting of us. I'd so curious what you sense the Spirit of God may be wooing us toward. I sense that even in the midst of this unsettling time the Spirit may be inviting us to embrace it as a Shalomic design opportunity. St Luke's exists not only for the flourishing of its members, but this place and all its inhabits... and even beyond.

Whether you've been a long-time member, old friend of St Luke's, or even a random online visitor, if there is any our community can join you in your quest to discover a way of love, we are here. I want you to know that you are not alone... God loves you, St Luke's love you, and you are always welcome here.

Peace,

Pastor Dwight