

Life transitions, by definition, require moving from the known to the unknown. Rough spots happen. If there is an elephant in the sanctuary, transition is a good time for a congregation to relocate it to a wildlife sanctuary.

The movie *Chocolat* (2000), is a parable for transitional process. A risk taking outsider arrives (with her flaws), a few locals experience healing transformation (as does the outsider), and the entire community discovers new life. There are plenty of rough spots along the way. A study guide is available by the mailboxes.

Jonah was a flawed outsider whom God used to bring new life to Nineveh. Unlike *Chocolat*, we don't know whether Jonah experienced transformation.

I have visited 34 households; several more visits will complete the project. I have been blessed by listening to your stories and desires for Shalom. The next steps are analyzing the information, and presenting a proposal for transitional process priorities to the Church Council (June 1), and to the congregation (June 19).

As in *Chocolat*, transition is not about change per se. Transitional processes will utilize congregational strengths in addressing dynamics which lead to fatigue or lack of unity of purpose. One of your many strengths is caring relationships which transcend your differences.

While I am preaching four Sundays in a row at the outset, Brian will continue to preach approximately once a month, and other preaching gifts in the congregation will be utilized.

Not everyone is excited about transition. That's normal. Just remember the sailors' profound theology: "Who knows, God may...."

Looking ahead:

May 22: 9:30am Jonah 2 *Whalehouse Religion*; Installation

May 29: 9:30am Jonah 3 *World's Worst Sermon*

June 19: 11:00am Session #2 Transitional period proposal presented

July 10: 11:00am Session #3 TBD

Projected in town schedule: May 22-24; May 29-June 1; June 5-7

-Gary Martin, Transitional Pastor

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