Grace and peace to you, the members of Trinity Presbyterian Church,

As I discerned a call to a new church, I was immediately drawn to Trinity's faithful congregation and loving spirit. Your congregation and your staff are well known and highly respected throughout the denomination. I believe this is in no small part because of your gracious welcome statement: "We hope to emulate Christ by celebrating you just as God created you, so that we might be made richer through the gifts only you have to offer." In an increasingly divisive and fear-filled nation, these words are more important than ever. They fill me with hope for the church and for the world.

Your Mission Statement communicates that you are people who embody a bold faith with intentional community, wise insight, deep compassion, and loving transformation. That you work actively toward an inclusive and diverse community, as well as with a force of good, not only in metro Charlotte, but well beyond the city limits.

As someone who has been ministering to and with people experiencing homelessness or poverty, I am grateful to read about the importance of relational mission in your ministries. It demonstrates how seriously relationships and community mean to you, even when working with folks on the outer margins of our society. Our finest ministry always grows out of genuine relationships and I look forward in walking with you as we continue to figure it out and do the best we can.

I believe we may be a good match for many reasons, but my passion for creating safe, loving, and intentional communities is high atop the list. Nothing brings me greater joy than to hear laughter, be absorbed by a conversation, and watch as love unfolds. Nothing brings me greater joy than for generations to overlap and to be a part of a transformation that has no other choice but to take place. Nothing brings me greater joy than to welcome the stranger into our midst, hear stories that are holy, and walk with that person through their joys and their defeats. Nothing brings me greater joy than to join your community and truly get to know one another with the essence of God in each other's hearts, souls, and minds.

I grew up at Waldensian Presbyterian Church in Valdese, NC. I love the church because it loved me into being, and continues to do so. WPC took their baptismal vows seriously and I would not be who I am today without them and the intentional loving community they provided. This is where I come from and this is what I want for all people I serve.

Your APNC has worked diligently to find you an associate pastor. This work of calling a pastor is important —but the church is always bigger than any one pastor. You, the congregation, make Trinity all that it is. And with my conversations with the APNC, I see a bright future ahead for this church and the Church as a whole. I look forward to the moment when we will meet each other (whether it's online or eventually, in person). I look forward to our learning and growing moments where we will lift each other up and ground each other with humility. I look forward to the laughs and the tears, the joys and the mistakes, the committee meetings and the prayerful moments. I'm especially excited to be a part of the true good you're doing in your community and in the world. I can't wait for you to meet my dog, Sadie, along with my partner, Douglas, and his dog, Nymeria, who will eventually join me in Charlotte. I'm especially eager to gather around the table, break homemade bread with you, share our stories, and learn about all that you love most, even if we have to gather over Zoom.

I will never claim to know everything about what the Spirit is doing or where the Spirit is leading us…but I have learned enough to pay attention, even when the Spirit whispers. I was gently nudged towards your congregation and I look forward to where the Spirit will lead Trinity Presbyterian Church while I'm with you.

Thank you for all you are doing — for Trinity Presbyterian Church and for the larger Church of Jesus Christ.

Peace,

Rebecca

Rebecca Heilman