Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As we wrap up our congregation’s time of study and dialogue regarding the question of the public role of women in the church this month, we want to express our appreciation for your interest and participation in this process. This year-long process, while being too lengthy for some, has been intentionally paced in this deliberate manner to allow plenty of time for prayer, reflection, dialogue and study. We especially want to thank the Task Force and their subcommittees who researched and planned this process; their investment of time and creativity was a great gift! The guest speakers we hosted during January also blessed us greatly with their knowledge and their passion for the spiritual health of the local church. During the next month, members of the congregation will have additional opportunities to share their thoughts, ideas and concerns, and we encourage you to prayerfully do so.

We remain committed to the spiritual development of this congregation as we seek to do God’s will. We believe this congregation has unique gifts which God can use in His mission—the restoration of all things and the reconciliation of all people (Acts 3, II Corinthians 5). We take seriously our commission as shepherds from Ephesians 4,

And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.
This commission envisions each of God’s people to continue to grow and mature spiritually and for the church to grow together in love—a beautiful picture and an awesome task!

As we enter the final Discernment phase of our process together, we look forward to hearing from you—what you’ve learned, how God has touched you this year, and your thoughts about how Glenwood should respond to God’s leading at this time. Appropriately, the Task Force has recommended 40 days of congregational prayer to begin this first Sunday of the month; suggested specific prayer topics will be publicized and we hope that everyone will participate. Secondly, all Glenwood members are encouraged to sign up to attend one of the Focus Groups during the month of February. Here are the times for those meetings:

- Sunday, February 5, 1:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, February 8, 6:30 p.m. (Childcare provided)
- Sunday, February 12, 1:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, February 15, 6:30 p.m. (Childcare provided)

These Focus Groups will be small group discussions of 10–12 people led by two shepherds per group. Multiple Focus Groups will meet during each of the four sessions. Focus Groups are designed so that we can listen to each other, share what we’ve learned throughout the process, and let the Shepherds hear from the members. After the Focus Groups, a survey will be available for each member, and we encourage you to complete those either on paper or online.

It’s a joy and a privilege to serve as the shepherds of this flock. The great love that we’re capable of, the great works that God is doing through His people, and the ongoing spiritual growth of our members, young and old, are all encouraging and fruitful. Please continue to pray for us, too, and to grant us a measure of grace as we join hands in ministry together.

Grace and peace to all!
40 Days of Prayer
FEBRUARY 5–MARCH 16

We invite you to join us in prayer throughout the next forty days.

2/5 Pray for Glenwood as a family.
2/6 Pray for wisdom and discernment.
2/7 Pray that we are graciously helping a fallen world stand up again.
2/8 Pray for ever-increasing Shalom (peace and wholeness).
2/9 Pray for protection from Satan.
2/10 Pray that we will be guided by the Holy Spirit.
2/11 Rejoice in God’s steadfast love and faithfulness.
2/12 Pray that our commitment to Scripture will be strengthened.
2/13 Pray that we will be willing to learn and grow.
2/14 Pray that we will respect and value others.
2/15 Pray for God’s will to be done in His time.
2/16 Pray for Christ to be glorified.
2/17 Pray for unity and one spirit.
2/18 Thank God for His abundant blessings.
2/19 Pray for the courage to follow God.
2/20 Pray for humility and patience.
2/21 Pray that God will bring His kingdom here through us.
2/22 Pray that we will cultivate the peace of Christ.
2/23 Pray for strength and endurance.
2/24 Pray for clarity and clear thinking.
2/25 Thank God for the saving blood of Jesus Christ.
2/26 Pray for compassion and love.
2/27 Pray that we will be willing to sacrifice.
2/28 Pray that we will trust in the goodness of God.
3/1 Pray for perseverance in times of uncertainty and confusion.
3/2 Pray that we are eager to listen to each other.
3/3 Pray that we are transformed by the renewing of our minds.
3/4 Rejoice in the victory of Christ over sin and death.
3/5 Pray that God will use us to accomplish His mission in this world.
3/6 Pray that we are made more into the image of God.
3/7 Pray that we will welcome and appreciate diversity.
3/8 Pray that we will be devoted to each other.
3/9 Pray that we will have open hearts and minds.
3/10 Pray that we will be faithful.
3/11 Thank God for His amazing grace.
3/12 Pray that we will offer grace to each other.
3/13 Pray that we will seek first the kingdom of God.
3/14 Pray that God will deliver us from evil.
3/15 Pray that we will encourage one another.
3/16 Rejoice in the conclusion of a lengthy process!