Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

With the beginning of my 10th year of serving as the Bishop of the Episcopal Church in Minnesota on the horizon, and after much prayer and conversations, the Spirit has led me to believe that it is time to begin the process of calling the 10th Bishop of Minnesota.

The question inevitably is, why now? ECMN is clear about its calling to engage God’s mission of becoming the Beloved Community. In every corner and in countless neighborhoods faithful Episcopalians are participating in the Jesus movement through building relationships and cultivating partnerships across the great state of Minnesota.

ECMN is incredibly healthy. We are blessed to have great clergy and lay leaders, a phenomenal Team of Missioners and very competent leaders at all our affiliates. Our Elected Bodies and our Mission Areas are functioning at a high level of collaborative leadership. We are, and have been for a number of years, very financially solid; including being debt free on all ECMN properties.

Why now? Because what I have learned in over three decades of leadership and ministry development is that the best time for leadership transition is when the organization is healthy, has strong shared leadership, and a clear sense of its mission. ECMN is in a great position to expand its capacity for engaging God’s mission of the Beloved Community.

Serving as Bishop of ECMN is an incredible privilege and an immense blessing. I absolutely love serving as the Bishop here. And that, too, is why now. Because I believe others should have the opportunity to serve in such a Spirit-filled place with such gifted people. It’s a great time for me to get out of the way and create space for the Spirit to bring whom you will bless next as you have immeasurably blessed me.

My family and close friends know that for years I have had a countdown app on my phone that marked the date I was eligible to activate my pension. That date was a little over a year ago. During the last year, Staci and I began to discern what a next chapter might look like for us and our family. Bishop Todd Ousley, Bishop for Pastoral Development, Presiding Bishop Curry and a few close colleagues and confidants have walked with us during this time and we are exploring a myriad of possibilities to use our gifts for God’s mission. Staci and I would greatly appreciate your prayers.

The election of your 10th Bishop will be at our ECMN Convention. The Ordination and Consecration of your 10th Bishop will be in February of 2020. Between the election and the Consecration I will take a portion of that time for my unused sabbatical. In short order, the Standing Committee, working with Bishop Ousley will call a search Committee and Transition Committee.

As ECMN begins this season of discernment for the 10th Bishop, we will continue to engage God’s mission of the Beloved Community. As always, I invite all of us to pray deeply and participate fully.

Blessings,

The Rt. Rev. Brian N. Prior, IX Bishop of the Episcopal Church in Minnesota