



**SAINT PAUL AREA SYNOD**  
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

105 WEST UNIVERSITY AVENUE ST. PAUL, MN 55103-2094  
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December 1, 2020

To the St. Paul City Council,

I am writing in support of the request for an Interim Use Permit for temporary emergency housing at Luther Seminary. I have lived in the immediate neighborhood of Luther Seminary for nearly twenty years and currently live at 2458 Como Avenue in St. Paul. I participated in the Town Hall conversation on November 17 and recognized many of those who were present.

From 2011 to 2014 I served as the Executive Director of the St. Paul Area Council of Churches (now Interfaith Action of Greater St. Paul), the host organization for Project Home. The concerns raised during the Town Hall were precisely the good questions community members should raise about a homeless shelter proposed for a residential neighborhood. Those concerns included staffing for the shelter, housing capacity, precautions related to the Covid-19 pandemic, security in and beyond the facility, and hospitality. The questions were received as sincere concerns by the Ramsey County staff and representatives of Luther Seminary.

The caveat I would add is that transparency will remain important throughout the duration of the interim use permit if it is granted. I ask that the St. Paul City Council encourage the Ramsey County Commissioners and the Luther Seminary administrators to make the following information available to the public with weekly updates where relevant:

- Terms of the contract between Ramsey County and Luther Seminary for the use of Stub Hall including proposed start and ending dates, financial considerations extended to the seminary, and any clauses covering an early termination of the contract.
- Weekly occupancy level.
- Weekly level of Covid-19 positive cases among those living in or staffing this congregate living facility.
- Weekly report of calls for emergency assistance (Rescue Squad or Police).

My hope is that such transparency will ensure the likelihood that the St. Anthony Park neighborhood will embrace future partnerships in a positive fashion.

Thank you for welcoming input from those of us in the adjacent neighborhood.

Sincerely,

Bishop Patricia Lull  
651-236-0208

cc: Commissioners Nicole Joy Fretheim, Mary Jo McGuire, Trista MatasCastillo, Toni Carter, Rafael E. Ortega, Jim McDonough, and Victoria Reinhardt; City Council Member Mitra Jalali;