



Pastor's Page

Do everything without complaining or arguing, 15 so that you may be innocent and pure as God's perfect children, who live in a world of corrupt and sinful people. You must shine among them like stars lighting up the sky, 16 as you offer them the message of life. If you do so, I have reason to be proud of you on the Day of Christ, because it will show that all my effort and work have not been wasted. Philippians 2:14-16 (TEV)

I need to explain some things about the letter of resignation I gave the Church Council last Sunday at the Council Meeting.

I'm resigning not because things have gone badly nor because of some kind of negative pique and not because I (nor I think you) are upset about things. On the contrary, as far as I know, things are basically going well. Many things have been wonderful to have been working with you. We certainly love you all. Rather, the reasons are outlined in the letter which will be handed out at the Annual Meeting and/or put into your boxes so everyone has access to it. The main problem is that I've slowed down physically and am not as mobile as I was at one time and in my opinion, the congregation deserves someone with more capable mobility. I creak and crawl. If you doubt that, sometime watch me try to crawl up into the stands for a Dunkerton basketball game or crawl down off the chancel staging and down the steps at worship at St. John's. I doubt that's going to get better, in spite of your concern for making mobility accommodations. There are also some timing factors in the life of the congregation involved.

I've been doing what I have for getting close to 60 years now, 58 to be exact. Think about the fact that people who work at John Deere do that for 35 and sometimes 40 years. Fifty-eight years goes a whole generation beyond that. Maybe their work is more difficult....I certainly would not say that it wasn't. But I will say that my work is hard enough.....at least I've heard more than one person say as people sometimes say of funeral directors: 'I wouldn't want your job.' There have been times when I wouldn't have wanted my work either!! Sixteen of those years have been working with you. That's longer than I've been anywhere. Nineteen of the other pastors who have served you here have served a shorter period of time, the longest for probably 8 or 9 years. Kids who are growing up in the parish today finishing high school would not remember any other pastor being here. There are some things that are good about that and some that probably aren't. My father served congregations until he was 80. I don't know if he could have gone much beyond that. But I'm four years beyond that and got started a year later.

As per the nuts and bolts of what's coming up....our agreement says that the congregation is to give two months' notice if she believes I've worked here long enough. You have had opportunities to give notice but it hasn't happened. I am to give two months' notice if I think that's the case. That is happening now. That time frame should allow us to take care of any "unfinished business". I suppose that is going to include cleaning up my "junk" in the pastor's office. (That's a joke!!) The yearlong-contract is up the end of August. (That isn't a joke!!) That's going to be the end of my work here under any circumstance. The kids have a cruise now scheduled for early September. That means that the two-month notice may last as long as 7 months from now or as soon as two months from now. For now, you will have to begin negotiations with the Northeast Iowa Synod Office as to the options that are going to "fit" for you and the next pastor (s) who will be working here with you. I wouldn't anticipate any problems with that but I won't be participatingor perhaps only in a rudimentary, basic way.... probably with some kind of exit conversation. Other than that, I step aside and they help you.

We love you all. We know some of the things with which you struggle and struggle with you. None of us would want that any other way. That's at the heart of good relationships.

God bless you and bless us all in the New Year. Pastor T.