

July 2024

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Paula and I are truly overwhelmed with love, the love of Christ Jesus flowing through you to us and our love flowing through Jesus for you. We are at a loss for words to express our gratitude for these past 44 years serving in your midst, having the privilege to share in the ministry of the Gospel in these two congregations.

These past two Sundays you put forth great effort to honor us as I reached my retirement. Paula and I are filled with much emotion and a deep sense of the grace and mercy of God who brought us here and allowed us to experience His presence in you, His beloved children.

You have been patient and forgiving in dealing with us as fellow sinners, and you have been respectful and kind as we endeavored to do the work of Christ here at home and throughout the world.

We want to give glory to God for you through Jesus Christ our Lord. Thank you for the words that you spoke and wrote, for the hugs and kisses and the tears and the laughter. Thank you for the extreme generosity through the gifts and expressions of gratitude. Thank you for the day of celebration, feasting, flowers and friends. We cannot begin to list everything, but we know how hard you all worked, not just for a day but for months. You kept a lot of the details secret yet Paula and I could see the extra cleaning, mowing, trimming, practicing, cooking, etc. We are truly humbled by all of this.

We thank you, we love you. We give Glory to God for you.

We invite you to drop by the farm and visit, and we look forward to joining you in the pew to worship and grow together through word and sacrament.

We could say much more, but we will close with the words of St. Paul in II Corinthians 13:14, *"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all."*

In the Love of Jesus,  
Paula and Pastor Emeritus Gerald

