



## Church of the Resurrection

August 1, 2016

Dear Friends,

As I write this letter to you I realize that my time as your pastor is drawing to a close. I am one who doesn't like to fret over things until it's time to deal with them. Well, I guess that time is now. It's only weeks away.

So, I want to say a few things to you while I still have your attention!

The first is that we have plenty of time to say our "goodbyes," but we will have to make good use of that time. Before you know it the time will have passed, so if you would appreciate a visit from me or would like to schedule a time to see me at the office, please do so. Or, if you just want to pop in and visit for a bit I would welcome that if I am free at the time.

It is not as if you'll never see my face again after September 18. But I will never be as publically present to you as I have been, week by week, over the past years. You may see me at Menards, a grocery store, or even a restaurant in the years to come. I will be your former pastor whom you may greet, and I will be happy to see you. I will not be interested in details of the goings on at the church as I once was, however, and I will not be at liberty to express an opinion about the ministry here other than to wish it my best.

Many of you have asked what church Cathy and I will be joining after we leave. That's a good question to which we don't have an answer. We plan to visit a number of churches. It will be fun to be able to worship at the congregations that make up the Lake Country Cluster. Who knows? I might even venture out to Palmyra to worship with my long-time colleague, Pastor Steve Blyth, at St. Matthews.

Since I will soon no longer be your pastor, I will not be available for weddings, funerals, baptisms, and other official acts on behalf of the congregation. After all, that would not be fair to the pastors who are called to serve you here. Please know, however, that I will rejoice with you at times of joy and grieve with you at times of sadness and loss.

Matt, Emily, Jake, Lexi, and Peyton will continue to be members at Church of the Resurrection after I am gone. They will be your partners in the ministry here. Just because they are members of my family, they won't have any inside information about whether I'd agree or disagree with ministry decisions that are made by the congregation. As I've said over so many years, this is God's ministry and your ministry, not mine.

So, I am still your pastor, still pleased to be in partnership with you, and still praying that God would use our time together to grow in faith, in love, and in service.

Sincerely in Christ,

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Pastors James Stein and Elizabeth Rossing

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