November 19, 2019

Dear LCGS Community,

When I was approached in February of this year about serving as your Interim Pastor, I was excited and eager to apply whatever gifts I had as well as my experience in 10 previous Interim assignments to this opportunity. I still am. But the time has come for me to face reality. Over the past several months I have been experiencing accelerated physical, emotional, and psychological stress in my responsibilities as your Interim Pastor. For this reason, after much prayer and numerous discussions with Shirley, I have submitted my resignation to the Congregation Council, effective at the end of February 2020. That will complete a full year with you. By then, the next pastor may have arrived or, at least been identified as a “Primary Candidate”. Should the next pastor be here before then, my service here will end sooner.

It is with mixed emotions that I come to this decision. No one event, nor several events, are responsible for my making it. I will continue to preach wherever and whenever I am asked to preach. The proclamation of the Gospel of Christ is my joy, my divine call, and my life. I will continue to visit the sick when asked to. I will continue to serve the ELCA whenever needed. But this is my last interim. While my heart tells me I can deal with anything that presents itself in any congregation with required energy and effectiveness, my head tells me that is no longer so. It is time to “hang it up,” and I wanted you to be aware of that with plenty of notice.

While we still have up to 3 months together, I want to take this opportunity to say thank you for your support, kindness, and accepting Shirley and me into this unique and Spirit-filled community of faith. I will look back on my time with you quite fondly. My hope is that during this period we can put forth even greater effort to be faithful trustees of God’s Word, the ministry we are all called to apply our personal gifts to, and the all-important financial support of this church, especially now as we look forward to receiving a new spiritual shepherd. Please continue to pray for wisdom and discernment in the process of finding the next pastor of LCGS.

In the peace of Christ and with thanks to God,

Pastor Richard Graf (“PG”)

Interim Pastor

Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd



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 **The Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd**

*“Where Strangers Are Welcomed as Friends”*