

As I complete my time as the “numbers guy” with the Rocky Mountain Synod – 5 years to the day that I arrived – I am overwhelmed with a variety of emotions. Having just reached the age where I have to take annual distributions from my 401 plan and having completed a 50-year career as a finance professional, I am ready to stop and rest. I have toyed with the idea of retirement on and off since I turned 65 but always felt there were still spreadsheets to create, financial statements to prepare, deposits to be made, bills to be paid and financial clarity to share. Whether I worked for my church, for the Synod, for local governments, or for higher education, I have always felt that God was calling me to serve in that place and at that time and to faithfully use the gifts that were given to me. But in an amazing sermon on the meaning of “Sabbath” several months ago, I heard God speaking directly to me – it’s time to STOP and finally take all the days of vacation I never took, see all the people and places that I let work keep me from, and savor the time to sit and marvel at God’s creation without hurrying to the office. The sermon was clear – observing Sabbath is not a request or suggestion from God – it is a command. The time has come to heed that command.

My time with the Rocky Mountain Synod has been filled with many “ups and downs” – a Bishop’s transition, the development of a two-year budget process, the mail theft of mission support checks (which resulted in the implementation of our very successful ACH mission support system), the move of the offices to Iliff School of Theology,

the revamping of the Synods’ financial reporting and of course all the trials and tribulations of the Lutheran Center. The stories are both heart-warming and heart-wrenching – there were so many days filled with laughter and equally with panic and tears. But throughout all of the good times and bad times, I met such incredible people along the way. I’ve developed relationships with folks who have inspired me, touched my heart, brought me joy and blessed me beyond measure. The greatest joy of my time with RMS has been talking to pastors, church staff and lay leaders who needed help navigating church finances and church governance. Sharing my experiences and knowledge not just related to my accounting degree but related to the fact I have served in church leadership in my own congregations since I was 28 years old (do the math LOL).

As with any of my previous positions, my ultimate objective is to leave the organization in a little bit better shape than when I arrived – I pray that this will be the legacy I leave behind with the Rocky Mountain Synod. I am proud of what I “have done” and regret what I “have left undone” – but somehow there just was never enough time. I will still be part of the Rocky Mountain Synod through my home congregation – Holy Shepherd in Lakewood, where we pray every Sunday for the leaders and congregations of RMS. I hope that in my retirement, I can still find a way to be a resource to congregations in the areas of church finance, budgeted, leadership and governance. I don’t know what that looks like but will keep listening for God’s call (if you have any ideas, I’d love to hear them). Thank you for your patience, your support, your

encouragement, and your humor these past five years. I pray God's deep and abiding love will fill your heart, soul and mind as together we work for the kingdom of God. In the words of Garrison Keillor "Be well, do good work and keep in tough" Pax Vobiscum