

To the members and friends of Covenant Presbyterian Church,

It is with sadness and gratitude that I depart from serving alongside you in the ministry at Covenant. Over the past five years I have been witness to beauty, love, and compassion that has left me consistently amazed.

I have seen the community of Christ support its members and reach out into the community. I have heard holy conversations as committees and groups came together to discern what God is calling us to do. I have cried with people as they have grieved, hurt, and suffered. I have celebrated the joy of births, baptisms, weddings, and all the other moments in life that cause our hearts to sing. I have prayed with and for people in distress, and I have had people pray for me in my own times of difficulty. I have preached and taught, and I have learned and grown.

These past five years have been a true blessing to me, and I am forever grateful for the ways in which this body has shaped my ministry and challenged me to grow and flourish. After over five years of service, two of which in a global pandemic, I have discerned along with the Session and Personnel Committee that the time has come for me to listen for where God is calling me next. It goes without saying that the past two years have been difficult, and I look forward to the opportunity to reconnect with my family, take some time to breathe and rest, and listen for God's still, small voice to guide me into this next season.

We are all connected by the common bonds of ministry and through the power of the Holy Spirit into this great Body of Christ, the Church. I am grateful that even when this pastoral relationship is officially dissolved that the relationship we have to with another as siblings in Christ will never fade. However, the dissolution of pastoral relationship does come with some important boundaries. These boundaries serve to support Covenant's ministry and to help the current and future staff thrive as this transition occurs.

As part of this transition, I have agreed:

- To not involve myself in any leadership and advisory role at Covenant, either publicly or privately, and will not give advice to anyone involved in a congregational disagreement or dispute.
- To avoid attending worship or any special events in the life of the church for at least two years after a new Associate Pastor is called, and after the two years will only do so after consulting the Moderator of Session.
- To not officiate in any special events in the lives of members of the congregation, such as weddings, memorials, baptisms etc. unless invited by the Moderator of Session.
- To refuse requests for pastoral services made by members of Covenant.
- To refrain from giving opinions or directions regarding church business that could undermine the transitions necessary for the church and the development of the relationship between the congregation and a new pastor.
- To take care that any relationships with personal friends who are members of Covenant with whom I share common interests and personal compatibility do not violate the above agreement.

These boundaries are the policy of the John Knox Presbytery and are important for maintaining the health of the church. This policy states, "when a pastoral relationship is dissolved or ended, it is

understandable that the pastor and their former parishioners would like to stay in touch and in some way continue the relationship they have enjoyed. However, doing so makes it more difficult for congregations to begin forming new bonds and relationships with their new pastor". For the past five years I have been honored to serve as your pastor, but congregations are much more than their pastors. I know that whoever or whatever comes next will be blessed by this congregation, and I would hate to stand in the way of that.

But nothing in this precludes us from praying for one another. I will continue to hold you in my prayers, individually and as a body.

I am grateful that Madison will continue to be blessed by the wonderful ministry here and am grateful that I have been so blessed as well.

Grace and peace be with you all,

Reverend Jeff Fox-Kline