

PASTOR LESLEY'S LETTER February 5, 2020

“Everything on earth has its own time and its own season.” Ecclesiastes 3:1

Dear Friends,

After sharing with you my morning devotion today from Mornings with Jesus, 2020, I will first of all highlight our Celebration 2019 on January 26th during worship. It was truly a celebration of some of the events that had occurred in the life of the church during the past year. Focusing on our theme: Heart-Centered Discipleship, each person on the Church Council brought up a heart to place on our large Heart Centered Bulletin board that lifted up a special event or memory in their area in the past year. It did bring into focus our many blessings as we work together as this Body of Christ, this Family of Faith, here in Pine Bluffs. After the service we enjoyed a yummy soup luncheon and warm fellowship!!!

Previously, on January 12th and 19th I announced my retirement that would happen this June. June 28th will be my last Sunday here and a new pastor will begin their appointment July 1st. In February the SPR Committee, District Superintendent Rev. Jeff Rainwater, and I will be meeting to begin communications about our new pastor and our hopes and prayers for the pastor and our church. Rev. Jeff will then take our wish list to the Cabinet of the Mountain Sky Conference and the District Superintendents where they will continue their discernment on our behalf. Rev. Jeff and I have already had several conversations about this process and he had indicated he will be our advocate for this church during those deliberations. You all know how much I care about this church and each of you and it will be difficult to let go. But as the Scripture tells us: “Everything on earth has its own time and its own season.” My time here will you will close but it has been a rewarding one. Now I will be able to spend more time with my dear husband, George, and explore what God has planned for me in this next chapter in my life. I trust in His love and mercy. “For surely I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, to give you hope and a future.” Jeremiah 29:11. (NIV)

Accordingly, in the next few months we have together I plan to continue with what Heart-Centered Discipleship means to us as a congregation. I would prayerfully seek to help us prepare for what the future holds for us, trying to help us with being able to acknowledge our identity as Christians, as disciples, as Methodists. Knowing whose we are as people of God we can face the future as His beloved community, regardless of the change that is inevitably coming to our denomination. Our church body here will weather this storm together, loving and caring for each other as we have done for years and years. That part will not change because it is who we are. I am thankful that I have been able to be a part of this for the few years I have had here and I commit to you to serve you as fully and completely as a servant of God in these next months as I have in the past. With God's help,

Gratefully, Pastor Lesley Matschke

