

Annual report of the Pastor 2017

It comes time once again to reflect on the year that has been and think about the year ahead. As I do that now, I am mindful of the words of the Apostle Paul

I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers.

Ephesians 1:16

It is truly a joy to serve two such vibrant and faithful parishes.

As I look at my service among you, I can divide it into three broad areas;

- 1) The Parish itself and the day to day stuff that needs to happen to serve a growing Parish; The visitation, worship planning, weddings, funerals, and baptisms etc. Which are all detailed on another page. This area also includes general oversight of day to day operations, providing drop in hours for people to visit and seek counseling if necessary.
- 2) The community- This area covers the ministerial association in town and the projects we do together. We have held joint worship services together and supported many other community projects. Unfortunately this year has also included large amounts of time and energy providing counseling and other support in the schools and in other places as we grapple with a series of tragic accidents. This year in our community ministry we hope to pull together an After Care Support team to support those released from Fort Dodge and Rockwall city prisons and help them integrate back into society as productive members. The Vacation Bible School that we do annually also falls under this category since many of our participants come from the wider community.
- 3) The wider church- in this area I would include the synod level things that we do together. I participated briefly on Synod Council filling an unexpired term. I attended Synod assembly, and have been asked to help with some specific synod level projects in the coming year that have yet to take shape. Also in this category I would include our service as an Internship parish, which came together really quickly. This may not seem like such a big thing, but the internship is a pivotal and important piece in the education and formation of a future Pastor. I am grateful for the energy with which

we have entered into this project, and how the parish has embraced it's teaching roles and responsibilities.

Things I'm thinking for the year ahead- This February begins our fifth year together as Pastor and parish, which is astonishing by itself. As we enter that fifth year together it presents us with an opportunity to focus on the next period of our life together. When I came both congregations were coming off a long interim period and mourning the leaving of long term pastors and a number of members. Although not expressed in this way, it was clear to me during the interview process that part of what the parish was seeking was a sense of stability and a settled Pastor who could appreciate the congregations for what they are and help lead them into more intentional community outreach, focus on mission, and growth in membership. Alongside that is the task of learning exactly what this partnership means and looks like. It has been a busy first five years; filled with growth in both congregations, intentional outreach across the globe and in our communities, and learning to partner together in worship, education, and mission. As Parish leadership we read together "The Strategically Small Parish;" Which led to some good discussion that identified some areas of strength and some areas of growth.

Here is what I would like to do next- I would like to spend the next year in a process of defining a vision, or strategic plan that will guide us for the next five years. (or more?) I would like us to define the following, at least in broad terms-

1. Goals- Where do we go from here? Is there something we wish to achieve or implement?
2. Resources- What do we have, and more importantly what will we need to achieve the goals we have identified?
3. How do we elicit congregational input?
 - a. Survey
 - b. Cottage meetings
 - c. Something else?

I remain extremely grateful for the opportunity to serve as Pastor in this place, and thankful for each of you, and each congregation.

2017 Summary of Pastoral Acts

BAPTISMS

Bethany

Cole Keller 7/15/2017

TOTAL BAPTISMS -3

Lost Island

Kalloway Cooke 11/12/17

Braxtyn Kropf 11/19/17

FUNERALS

Bethany

Gary Frink 1/14/17

Ron Seaman 1/23/17

Carol Andersen 3/3/17

Dawn Naig 3/27/17

Linda Laws 5/4/17

Allen Trelstad 5/26/17

Ruth Damstrom 6/14/17

TOTAL FUNERAL SERVICES – 7

Lost Island

NON MEMBER SERVICES - 2

Nancy Kacmarynski 7/27/17

Arvin Sidles 8/9/17

WEDDINGS

Diane Clasing and Robert Steger 05/28/17

OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES

In addition to those listed I also did Hospital visits as needed

Regular shut in communions for 15 members

Regular Bible Study and Worship at the Emmetsburg Care facilities

CONTINUING EDUCATION

Annual Rural Ministry Conference

Internship Supervisor Training