



Why are you retiring?

Ecclesiastes 3:1 pretty much answers that:

“There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens.”

36 years ago there were lots of signs indicating that it was time to begin studying for the pastoral ministry. 32 years ago, God directed me to begin that ministry at Shepherd of the Hills in New London. Then it came time to plant a new congregation, New Life, in Spicer. Followed by a time to bring Shepherd of the Hills and New Life together as one congregation, Living Word. Then it came time for a new building. Now, the time is near for a dedicated sanctuary. And there are lots of signs pointing to the need for a younger pastor to lead Living Word into the next phase of its ministry.

When are you retiring?

The end of this year. The current plan is to have the Christmas Eve Candlelight Service be my last service.

Are you moving?

Interestingly, this is the question I’ve gotten more than any other. We have no immediate plans to move, but our hope is to eventually move somewhere nearer to our kids.

What are you planning to do?

As I mentioned in a sermon a couple weeks ago, my kids have it all planned out for me: I can be an usher at Twins games during the summer and an usher at Wild games during the winter. And during the day I can be a “courtesy car” driver at a Chevy dealership. You know, the person who delivers a loaner car to people’s homes and picks up their Corvette to bring to the shop for an oil change. Unfortunately, I envision problems coming up with that job: Customer: “Hey! This Corvette has 150 more miles on it than when you picked it up!” Me: “Oh, that’s because it’s my policy to give every car an extensive test drive - just to make sure everything works as it did when you drove it off the showroom floor. Like, does it still go from 0 to 60 in 4 seconds? (Rest assured, it does!)”

As for realistic plans that I have. Our house and land have plenty of things that need work, so that will keep me busy for quite awhile. I’m going to keep recording daily devotions. At some point, I will probably do some fill-in preaching - but not right away. Violet has been my “behind the scenes” assistant for the past 32 years, now it’s my turn to return the favor and help her in her new venture of creating fabric and surface designs from her artwork.

How do we go about looking for a new pastor?

Our District President, Rev. Brady Finner, will be here this Thursday, August 6, at 6:00 p.m. to explain the steps in the process of calling Living Word’s next pastor. Everyone is invited to attend that meeting. President Finner said he wants to keep the meeting fairly brief, so roughly a 7:00 p.m. ending time.

If you aren't able to attend this Thursday's information session, here is a summary from our Circuit Visitor, Rev. David Tilney:

"President Finnern will have one meeting with the congregation in the beginning (August 6). Then, for the most part, the Call Committee will work with me (Rev. Tilney). The vacancy pastor will provide pastoral care to the congregation. They are welcome to contact either of us at any time."

Rev. Tilney will be on vacation during August, but can be reached after that at his cell 218-206-5825 or by email: dmtilney@hotmail.com

Rev. Tilney referenced a "vacancy pastor." This is typically a retired pastor or pastor from a nearby congregation (or a combination of the two) who will lead worship and classes and attend meetings. I've been in contact with a retired pastor who lives in New London, Rev. Terry Bramsted, about the possibility of serving as Living Word's vacancy pastor. He is currently serving a vacancy in Fair Haven, but is hopeful they will have received a full-time pastor by the time we need a vacancy pastor.

Please don't hesitate to keep asking questions whenever they come up.

Thanks for asking,
Pastor David

Send your questions to pastor@livingwordlutheran.net