

Pastor Sailer's Page

Faith Lutheran Church
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THANK YOU! and PRAISE GOD!

This weekend, as I end my service as your pastor and begin my work as the President of The South Dakota District—LCMS, these words of St. Paul, expressing his love for the church at Philippi, certainly reflect my love for you: "I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. And I'm sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:3-6).

It is a blessing to be able to express to you a deep, heart-felt "thank you" for the past sixteen years of our service together – mine as your pastor, yours as members of God's "royal priesthood" of believers (cf. I Peter 2:9). It has been a joy-filled blessing for me. And it has been God's doing. Praise Him!

I thank God for your faith, which trusts Christ alone for forgiveness and salvation and which trusts God as your "Keeper," your Provider of all things physical and spiritual. Your faith has been an inspiration to my faith. This is God's doing. Praise Him!

I thank God for your "faith working through love" (cf. Galatians 5:6), as you respond to His gifts with lives of faithfulness and service. Your faithfulness and service have brought joy to me and to the many, many other recipients of your faithful service. This, too, has been God's doing. Praise Him!

Thank you for providing for me and my family through a generous salary and health and retirement benefits, but more importantly, through your prayers, encouragement, concern for and interest in me, Sarah, Tim, Aaron, and Dan. God has made us and you a spiritual family, not blood relatives, but water and Spirit relatives. That kind of spiritual family shares time for a while here and forever in

heaven, because of God's grace in Jesus Christ.

Yes, it has been a wonderful sixteen years together.

It is very unusual that, even though I must leave you as your pastor, Sarah and I are not leaving Sioux Falls, and it's a special blessing that we will still see you from time to time. And yet it will be different – you will have Pastor Kory and, sometime in the future, another pastor to shepherd you. You will be the beneficiaries of their ministry of Word and Sacrament. They will benefit from your faith and love, as I have.

Pastor and Flock, Flock and Pastor – lovingly and effectively working together for the sake of Christ's Kingdom. I believe that can be said of the last sixteen years in the history of Faith Lutheran Church. In my position of District President, I will hold up this congregation as a model of how a congregation and their pastor(s) can work together peacefully, lovingly, diligently, effectively.

My prayer is that you will continue to work hard to make such a loving and effective relationship between Pastor and Flock happen for the next sixteen years and beyond. God will bring innumerable blessings to you and to countless others when such peace, love, and unity prevail.

Praise Him! Trust Him!

God bless you, beloved Faith Flock!