

## Farewell and Godspeed

Ecclesiastes is read in the Jewish Community during the Feast of Sukkoth. This festival celebrates God's care for the people of Israel as they wandered in the wilderness; it celebrates God's care and joy that can be found in life, even when it's fragile and unpredictable.

*From Ecclesiastes 3:1 "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:..."*

While we know this verse well, it is what follows that speaks to me, for the Hewitts and for King of Glory.

*From Ecclesiastes 3: 11 – 14 "He has made everything suitable for its time; moreover he has put a sense of past and future into their minds, yet they cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end. I know that there is nothing better for them than to be happy and enjoy themselves as long as they live; moreover, it is God's gift that all should eat and drink and take pleasure in their toil. I know that whatever God does endures forever; nothing can be added to it, nor anything taken from it; God has done this, so that all should stand in awe before him."*

For us both, the Hewitts and King of Glory, we do not know what lies ahead, BUT we know our past – God has been good. KOG has been blessed with a faithful and good pastor who has shepherded many amazing ministries that ARE the heart, hands and voice of Christ. And the Hewitts have been blessed with friends, family and "sheep" who will miss them terribly but will continue to be the heart, hands and voice of Christ. AND we know for the future that God will continue to bless us – the Hewitts and King of Glory – for God wants us to be happy in our lives, and "that whatever God does endures forever".

Pastor David we called you to be our pastor: to proclaim God's Word, to baptize new members into the Church of Jesus Christ, to announce God's forgiveness to us, and to preside at our celebrations of the Lord's Supper. With the Gospel you have comforted us in times of sickness and trouble and at the death of our loved ones. Sharing our joys and sorrows, you and your family have been important to our life together in this church and in our service to this community. We called you to be our pastor – we received through you AND Diane AND your family – friendship, compassion, musical blessings, care for our children and youth, examples of servanthood and Christian living, laughter, Dad jokes a-plenty, the best lasagna recipe EVER, and so much more.

Farewell and Godspeed is to say "good bye", but it is more....According to the Oxford English Dictionary, Godspeed is an exclamation meaning "an expression of good wishes to a person **starting a journey**". Pastor David and Diane, King of Glory wishes to say, "Godspeed" – you are beginning a new journey with In – Ky Synod office, and we wish you well. We desire for you all God's blessings on this new adventure.

We look forward to hearing how God's has asked you to be his heart, hands, and voice in this new role, and we pray for you both to find rejuvenation, strength, and "pleasure in all [your] toil".

Let us pray. Eternal God, you continually call your people to new tasks and set before them new opportunities. We thank you for your servants, Pastor David and Diane, and their years of ministry in your Church. By your Spirit, prosper those deeds done according to your will; and grant them grace to continue your work in this new season of their life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Grace.** Let us pray, Dear God, you showed us the "power of a meal" through your son, Jesus Christ – he ate with sinners, tax collectors, those on the fringes of society; he provided food for those in need, offering what he had, increasing the loaves and fishes, and the bounties in the boats; and he comforted even in his last days his disciples by sharing the Passover meal before his death and resurrection. Let this meal bring together all in our community, providing nourishment, strength, fellowship and comfort as we celebrate and rejoice in the ministries at King of Glory through Pastor David and Diane. Please bless the hands that have prepared the meal and all the preparations, giving thanks to you for the bounty that you have supplied. In your name we pray, Amen.

**Laying on of hands.** Let us pray. Dear loving God, surround Pastor David and Diane with your love, support and guidance as they begin this new journey of semi-retirement and work with the synod office. Over the years we have shared tears of sorrow and joy, celebrated birth and deaths, and rejoiced in baptisms, confirmations and marriages – help us to all recognize that through our relationship with you – God, Jesus Christ and Holy Spirit - we will continue to share these moments. We ask that you grant them strength, guidance and grace for this new adventure and the knowledge to know that our love goes with them. We thank you for them for they have blessed us with much and we wish for them your blessings in the months and years ahead. Let us share now the words what we will always share together – saying the words that you taught us to pray – Our Father, who are in heaven.....