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August 23, 2022

Dear Elders,

I thank God every time I think of you. The Apostle Paul said that, and I couldn't agree more. My brief season with First Pres has been my most enjoyable experience as a pastor in my more than twenty-five years of ministry. It has much to do with the wonderful staff and elders I have had the privilege of working with. I've been in many churches with many vision statements. This one just happens to have found a way to describe yourselves as if you had looked in the mirror and written down what you saw, "Love First."

Carolyn and I have had the adventure we were hoping for when we transitioned to interim ministry. Coeur d' Alene has been a year-long quest for us to experience as much of this remarkable community and its surroundings as we can. From all the events taking place on Sherman Ave to walks along the river, circling Tub's Hill and walking the "world's longest floating boardwalk," to hiking Mineral Ridge, playing tourists in Wallace, riding the Hiawatha Trail to being awed by the beauty of the Milky Way on the darkest night at Heyburn State Park. And yes, even learning to shovel snow. We haven't done it all, but we've come close.

While our personal lives have been an exciting journey, my joy has been to see this church prepare itself for its future in such outstanding and positive ways. While I could write pages about all you have accomplished, I will just bullet point some highlights.

- Coming through the year in one of the strongest financial positions I've ever seen during a transition.
- Participating in a self-discovery process with significant congregational participation, arriving at clarity that will drive the direction of the church for years to come.
- Establishing two task forces, Tech and Children & Families, which have propelled decision making in these vital and strategic categories.
- Expanding the Deacon's clothing drive into the Neighborhood Closet Ministry.
- Moving out of Covid with grace, allowing everyone to be comfortable with their personal decisions.
- Blessing three beloved staff members, Chris, Carley, and Ray, who all left with love and support.
- Welcoming wonderful staff, Naomi in the office, Kyler and Heather in Children's, and Norilee volunteering in worship.

Of course, the biggest, most important, and highly challenging accomplishment was finding and calling a new pastor in just a year from the time your last pastor left. That is a record that may stand for many years in the Presbytery of the Inland Northwest.

Now I'm turning you over to God, our marvelous God whose gracious Word can make you into what He wants you to be and give you everything you could possibly need in this community of holy friends. (Eph. 20:32)

With much gratitude,



Interim Pastor Neal Nybo