

Report to Congregation Council  
October 22, 2024

It's been 5 weeks since we last met at Council ... and what a month and week it was! The highlight for me this past month involved my traveling to LaGrange, Texas to officiate at the wedding of my youngest twin, Jon and his now wife Josie. Jon is the first of my three children (and the youngest of them) to get married. They chose to marry at the Lutheran church camp where they first met. It was a fun-filled and joyous event, filled with lots of dancing and reconnections of friends and family. As a pastor, I didn't expect that it would "feel" any different than any other wedding while officiating ... boy, was I wrong! I started to get emotional as the ceremony began, but I was able to choke it down and get through it. I cannot express what an honor and privilege it is to be able to be a part of the seminal moments in the lives of people ... but especially in the lives of my own children. It's a true gift!

There were many things that happened these past weeks. In addition to my son's wedding, I officiated the wedding of Jennifer George and Tyrone Tripp. I baptized Oliver Schaller. Two of our saints entered the Church Triumphant ... Marliese Leggitt and Joan Batke. I led the Celebration of Life for Joan, while Pastor Jim Watson led the funeral for Marliese (as I was away for my son's wedding). Bishop Laura Barbins led worship on October 13th. We celebrated Lindsay and Austin and their future child with a baby shower, and we prayed for Lindsay as she began her maternity leave, which will be followed up by her 3-month sabbatical. A few of us met up at Bent Ladder for an evening of fellowship. I attended a High School football game to cheer on some of the youth of the congregation. I visited the site of a future wedding coming up in November with the couple and discussed the ceremony and plans. The Luther League held their annual spaghetti dinner and dessert auction (I finally won something after a couple years of bidding!). I attended a couple of meetings. Bible and Brew met (although we took October off). And many of us attended the Fall Festival at Richardson Farms. In addition, I was out to visit with some of the shut-ins/hospitalized/ members to offer support and pastoral care.

Probably the biggest adjustment that happened during this time (towards the end) has been wrapping my mind around the various ministry items I'll be picking-up with Deacon Lindsay being away for six months. Although I've performed most of them while I was serving St. Luke's as a solo pastor, the adjustment is figuring out how to honor (as best I can) how things have been done by her these past seven years, while at the same time doing things the way I do them. I've found myself asking many questions about "traditions" and "methods" from various people, as I don't want to step on things or leave items out when they've become established and treasured by the congregation. Just the realities of me being me as a different individual. It's been good, as I continue to comment that I'm learning something new about the congregation, even after these past two and a half years.

In Christ, with Christ, for Christ!  
Pastor Steve