

From Our Pastor – May 2018

WELCOME!

Dear New Church Family,

I look forward to beginning ministry with you on July 1, and I look forward to getting to know you, to growing in Christ with you, and to sharing Christ's love with the people of Sun City.

I would like to share with you the things that pull most strongly on my heart and that most powerfully shape my approach to ministry.

I keep discovering how deeply and constantly God loves us. Therefore, my greatest personal desire is to keep growing in God's rich love. Over and over again I find that His love fills me with the hope and strength and comfort and peace and joy and restoration and inspiration that satisfies my soul.

My greatest hope in ministry flows out of that. I hope to help others to know ever more deeply the depth of God's love for them personally. I appreciate the fact that God did not just send to earth an announcement of His love for the world; He came Himself in the person of Jesus to show His love for us. Before going back to heaven, Jesus commissioned His disciples (and us) to do the same: to show God's love to the world by how we love one another. In John 13:35, Jesus said, "By this all people will know that you are My disciples, if you love one another." Therefore, my aim is to love you and to help us to love one another so that others in Sun City might see Jesus in us and be drawn to God through us.

I love God's Word, too. It is the expression of God's heart and truth and wisdom to us. I find in it wonderful inspiration, wise counsel, needed direction, and challenging correction. As John Wesley remarked, "Whether you like it or not, read and pray daily. It is your life; there is no other way.... Do justice to your soul; give it time and means to grow. Do not starve yourself any longer." Therefore, I love to preach and to teach God's Word. I look forward to digging into the treasure of Scripture with you in worship and in Bible Study.

Ministry cannot succeed without prayer, for prayer is the recognition of our dependence on God, and prayer is the way we tap into the omniscience and omnipotence of God. Prayer is also the way we join hearts with and for one another. Therefore, I look forward to joining you in prayer over what God will do in our lives and in Sun City. For now, I will be praying for you, and I hope you will pray for us as we prepare for our move to Sun City.

Lastly (but not least), I look forward to working together to discern what areas of service and mission God is calling us to. Love is not merely something that is discussed or studied. It is lived out in action. That means that Christians and churches are always called into service and mission. I do not know what particular mission(s) or area(s) of service God is calling us to engage in, but I look forward to discerning this with you.

Tom Tripp