

Special Message

from Rev. Derrick Porter

1 Corinthians 3:6-8 (NRSV) ⁶ I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. ⁷ So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. ⁸ The one who plants and the one who waters have a common purpose, and each will receive wages according to the labor of each.

Dear NUMC,

I am aware that the announcement of my departure in July came as a shock to many of you. It was difficult to see and hear some of your reactions. It was good though to see and hear how God has enabled us to connect in so many positive ways on such a short journey.

Each of us in ministry brings our gifts and graces to our assigned churches for a season. Last year it became clear to me that I should prayerfully explore where my gifts could be best used. In our process in the United Methodist Church each November the Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) and the pastor each receives an advisory form to submit to the Bishop. The SPRC indicates if they would like the pastor to return for another year of service. NUMC's SPRC committee indicated that they desired for me to return. On my advisory form to the Bishop I indicated that I would like to be considered for another appointment. The lack of an associate has been a factor that has weighed heavy when considering the volume of work and care necessary in this position. The current financial constraints made this help unavailable. Maybe a younger version of me could have kept pace but I am the only version of myself available and I am exhausted. This was taken under advisement by the Bishop and after the examination of many other factors external to NUMC the Bishop appointed me to The Church of the Atonement.

Newark United Methodist Church is a wonderful church with many ministries and beautiful people that I will cherish and miss. I pray for NUMC to have a spirit of unity envelop this congregation as you greet your next pastor. Please provide them with welcome, support and prayers as a pastor's job is more difficult than you can imagine. God has a plan for NUMC. As you go through the revisioning process listen for that still, small voice of God. Heed its direction and sacrifice what is necessary to bring the Kingdom of God here in Newark. You will be starting this revisioning and restructuring process in earnest with your next pastor who will live into it with you. I pray God's blessing for you on this journey and new chapter in the life and work of NUMC.

Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV) ¹¹ For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

Sincerely,
Rev. Derrick E. Porter