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To: fccv@snet.net;
Date: Fri, December 28, 2012 11:19:27 AM
Cc:
Subject: Pastor's Weekly Email

"For all that has been--Thanks.
To all that shall be--Yes!"
Dag Hammarskjold

I know of a colleague who wrote this short New Years poem on the first page of the journal he began each January 1st. Hammarskjold's words are such an eloquent acclamation of thanks for the past and hope for the days to come.

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As I write this final email to you as your interim pastor, there is certainly much to be thankful and hopeful for at FCCV. This is a bittersweet time, compounded by the pace and emotions of the holidays and our gradual recovery from the tragedy in Newtown two weeks ago.

I often joke when I begin a new interim that "you've only got to learn one name, I've got to learn a few hundred." (Hint, hint---wear your nametags to the church on Sunday as you welcome in Meg and Dean. It will be a big help to them in their transitioning in.) The reverse of that now is that you've only got to say good-bye to one person while I've got to say good-bye to several hundred.

My memories of our time together over the past 28 months are many and diverse. Joy, sadness, challenge, reward, struggle, reconciliation, worry, and hope, to name a few.

There are a number of memories that stand out, but certainly the most moving one for me was when you as a congregation cared and ministered to Maggie and me in the days after her cancer diagnosis. On the Sunday when this concern was raised up during the joys and concerns, I was doing my best to cope with this worry and still lead worship. What I will never forget is walking into coffee hour that day and finding a "gauntlet of help and support" waiting for me. Debbie Marshall, Steve Morse, and a line of others (whose names I may not recall, but whose presence at that time I still treasure) whose lives or families had been impacted by breast cancer were lined up to meet me. "I know this is a scary time, but you'll get through it and you're not alone." "I've been where you are today. Here's my number, call me anytime." "It's been three years since my diagnosis. Tell Maggie to call me if she has any questions."

Happy to say, Maggie and I got through the emotions and worries of those days, buoyed by the prayers, support and grace of so many. Her follow-up cancer screens last month came back negative, a report we always find as a reason to celebrate and give thanks for.

As we conclude this special time of transition ministry, please know I have felt blessed to have had the chance to serve here and to share in ministry with you. I believe that FCCV is well poised to begin the new year and for Meg Watson to begin her ministry here in a time of great hope. There is a spirit and a receptiveness to new ideas, energies and emotions which are marks that the transition time is over and that it's time for me to move on.

Blessings and peace in the exciting days ahead.

David

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Last Sunday, we rejoiced in the annual Lessons and Carols service where we gloried in the good news through the familiar stories and Scriptures as well as the spirited music of Christmas.

On Christmas Eve, the early service was filled with joy as our children led much of the service as they told the story in words, song, costumes and pageantry.

During the later service, the Sanctuary Choir inspired us with rich singing and the majestic music of the season. And we experienced together the beauty of singing Silent Night in a darkened Sanctuary lit only by candles.

This Sunday, we will celebrate the conclusion of our transition interim time. We will share in the ritual for the conclusion of an interim ministry. The sermon will be based on I Corinthians 3:4-11.

I hope we can all be together to give God thanks for God's help in ages past and for being our hope for years to come.