

## Pastor's Note for August

Dear friends,

It has been an amazing journey with you these past two years. We have celebrated together and cried together. We welcomed visual art into worship. We have built new bridges together with St. James and with our community. We've seen the construction of the new child care center completed, installed a wheelchair access lift, and renovated some spaces that needed improvement. We got a new roof. We completed a self study and appointed a PNC. We ate together and talked to each other about our hopes and fears. We grew in faith and adjusted our bylaws. And now we have called a pastor, Rev. Barrett Payne, who will be here in September.

So it's time for me to talk to you about saying goodbye, and how we can do this in the best possible way to help your incoming pastor. My policy as an interim is to have no contact with my former church for one year after a new pastor starts. We can say hello if we see each other out and about, but let's avoid hanging out or meeting up until September of 2025. This gives Barrett a chance to become your pastor without me getting in the way. I once became a pastor at a church where the former pastor would not let go, even though he had retired. He continued saying yes to funerals and weddings, offering counseling to members, and generally continuing to be the pastor in all kinds of ways. Needless to say, it was hard for me to be the pastor and to build connections. I don't want to do that to Barrett. It may seem extreme, but I would ask that anytime you feel like reaching out to me, starting this September, you reach out to Barrett instead. Invite him to go out for lunch or coffee. Meet with him to talk about spiritual concerns. Send him an email or a card letting him know that you are praying for him. You may hear that I'll be guest preaching at various churches around in our presbytery, but please don't come to hear me. Be faithful in your attendance in worship services at James Island. A year will go by quickly, and then I can be back in touch with you as your friend, and I'll happily share with you what I will have been doing to start a new church in North Charleston with the support of our presbytery.

Speaking of which, my next adventure will be planning and opening a new church in our current presbytery building, tentatively named The Presbyterian Church of the Arts at Park Circle. I've never started a church before, so I have a lot to learn if I want to meet the goal of opening PCAPC in fall of 2025. I welcome your prayers, and I'll be praying for you as well, as you transition to your called and installed senior pastor. I know you'll be in good hands.

During the month of August I look forward to getting together with you in various ways to say goodbye and to celebrate our time together. Feel free to reach out if you want to schedule something with me before I go. I love you all very dearly, and I'm very grateful to be your pastor for one more month!

In Christ,



Rev. Tricia