

June 2010

### From the Pastor's Study.....

“*In my beginning is my end.*” So wrote T. S. Eliot in his poem *East Coker* from his Four Quartets. That certainly turned out to be true for me! Who would have guessed that the church that lovingly birthed my ministry would be the church to send me forth into retirement from parish ministry?

How grateful I am for our long time relationship and all the ways that “my beginning” prepared me for “my end.” Here are a few of those ways.....

Rev. Bob Hannum was an awesome mentor! He taught me the importance of pastoral care and the significance of preparing and presenting Sunday worship. It was his belief that “church should never be cancelled” that led to some interesting overnights at Holy Trinity on stormy, snowy Saturday nights these past few years.

As your Associate Pastor in the mid 80’s, I met monthly with a group of brain injured individuals on Sunday afternoons. Some of you will remember Susan Edwards and Scott Sayer, Mike Lynch and Barry Gilks. These young people taught me the importance of having a safe and sacred place to think and talk about the question: “Where is God in the midst of trauma and tragedy?” Now years later in my “retirement,” I will bring spiritual life to brain injured residents through *Supportive Living, Inc.*, a non profit organization that currently assists survivors of brain injury to live as independently as possible. My passion to minister to those who are particularly challenged has never wavered.

In my beginning, Holy Trinity challenged me to rethink my views about homosexuality and the church. My own transformation led me to be an advocate and spokesperson for lesbian, gay, bi sexual and transgender people who continue to be excluded and abused by our United Methodist denomination. In my retirement, I will continue to work for their inclusion so that our denomination can have integrity when it claims to have “Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors!!”

In the season of my beginning, Holy Trinity presented me with a red stole for my ordination. I have worn that stole every Pentecost in each of the churches that I have served. During these last five years, I have provided rainbow stoles for all of the spiritual leaders at Holy Trinity. These stoles have

been passed from leader to leader at the time of transition. I would like to leave my own rainbow stole on the altar for Rev. Larry Wimmer on my last Sunday at Holy Trinity so that when he arrives, he may wear the stole as he inherits the amazing ministry with all of you.

I thank you for being my partners in ministry at the beginning and the end of my years of parish ministry. We have laughed together, wept in joy and sorrow, taken Gospel risks, agreed at times to disagree, sung and prayed and kept silent, listened for God's intentions for Holy Trinity, built programs and projects and a house, and all the while, experienced the awe of Jesus' grace and God's love and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. Thank you! Thank you for these years of ministry and memories that I will always treasure.

Always in Christ,  
Rev. Susan