

Pastoral Report - Rev. John R. Kreutzwieser

“See what kind of love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God.” [1 John 3:1] By the love of God we are members of His family and heirs of eternal life. This is the message of our faith in Jesus Christ. To share this message our congregation sees it’s mission as the task “to engage people in authentic Biblical worship leading to growth in Christian living.” How have we been doing in this task? After being your pastor for 10 years I sometimes wonder if we are really making any headway in this mission. Have I been an effective spiritual leader for our church?

The year before I arrived at Emmanuel, in 1997, the average worship attendance was 158. After 10 years of ministry our average worship attendance in 2007 was 165. In 10 years we have only grown 4% in our worship attendance.

In 1997 the number of confirmed Lutherans in the congregation was 266. Today our active confirmed members equal 254 [a loss of 5%]. What has happened over these 10 years?

I believe God has been active in our ministry together and God has allowed us to accomplish some amazing things in the past 10 years. Often the raw numbers don’t tell the whole story. Statistics can be confusing and misleading. I believe that God is still calling me to be your pastor and I plan to be here another 10 years, unless God indicates otherwise. Let me share some of the things that have happened in our congregation over the past 10 years.

Of the 266 confirmed members at the end of 1997, only 145 still remain in our congregation. That means that 45% of the people have either died, moved, or left our congregation. In 10 years in Moose Jaw I have officiated at 73 funerals. That means that if nothing had happened over the past 10 years we would have a rather small congregation today. That means that about ½ the people you see in our church today will probably not be here 10 years from now. That’s quite a change to deal with.

What has happened over the past 10 years? There have been 18 adult baptisms, plus 77 child baptisms. There have been 57 adult confirmations, plus 51 youth confirmations. We have seen many families come and go over the past 10 years. We peaked our average worship attendance in 2001 with 205 people but many of those families have moved away since. The pressures on people to participate on Sundays in many sports, social, family, and community events has increased over the past 10 years. I am thankful we have the type of average worship attendance that we do. There are 366 people associated with our congregation. An average worship attendance of 165 means that on any given Sunday 45% of those people are at the Divine Service. Each week the pews are filled with many different people, as regular every week church attendance is a rarity in most lives. Is this a concern? Of course it is. However, many of our families continue to attend on a regular basis, just not every week anymore. We are still a viable active congregation as our Organizational Manual [still in progress by Blair Kardash] will show later this year.

I am grateful for the many men who have served as Elders over the past 10 years. They have provided me with spiritual support through many things and have guided this congregation in an active spiritual life.

I am grateful for the many people who have served on church council, various committees, and ministry groups over the past 10 years. Our congregation is an active place.

I am grateful for the assistance of Barb Dick in the pastoral ministry of our congregation over the past 10 years. Many things would not have been accomplished without her.

I am grateful for the prayers and support of the many people associated with our congregation over the past 10 years. Thank you!