

The Apostle Paul would begin most of his letters with the words, "Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." It was a new and unique way of beginning a letter for his time. "Grace" was a Greek word while the Jewish population would greet one another with the word, Shalom or "peace." But Paul combined the two to show that a new thing had happened in the world. The wall of division had been done away with and God had come in an act of grace in Christ to bring peace to all people, Jew and Gentile alike.

A new thing is happening at First Presbyterian Church, too. Reverend Lacy Sellars, a minister who has ably served you these past ten years has retired and now a transitional minister has been hired to serve you for the next year. You may be wondering what a "transitional minister" is and how it might be different than the ministry of a settled pastor. As I remarked in my taped greeting to you this past week, it has been said that the beginning of a transitional ministry is an ending and the end of a transitional ministry is a beginning. What is meant by that is that the beginning of a transitional ministry is the ending of a pastoral relationship with Pastor Lacy who has ably and lovingly served you these past ten years. The ending, however, of a transitional ministry is the beginning for a new called minister who will begin a new and settled ministry with you. But between the grief of saying goodbye to Pastor Lacy and the excitement of calling a new minister lies the transition period. It is within this period of time that transitional ministers devote their work.

So, I am very happy to be with you. I have met some of you already and your warm and welcoming spirit and sense of humor has impressed me and made me feel at home. I look forward to getting to know all of you and putting names with faces. But for

right now, with the “new normal” we are in, I plan to continue the conversation with you through the weekly newsletter and telephone calls. My email at the church is ministerfpc@gmail.com. I also have that email on my phone so please feel free to email me with anything. My telephone number is 515.240.1243. I plan to begin calling members to check in but if you should ever need to speak to me about anything, please don't hesitate to give me a call.

I look forward to settling in and to the adventures that will come in the weeks ahead. I believe God can do amazing things in the in-between times. I am looking forward to getting to know you, the session, the Elders and Deacons and the ministry teams at First Presbyterian Church.

God's very best for you and I will be seeing you along the way

Brad