

April 4, 2024

Friends of Watertown First United Methodist Church,

I write today to share that as a United Methodist Pastor who has covenanted to go where I am sent, the time has come for me to go to a new place. My last day as Senior Pastor in Watertown will be June 30, 2024, as Bishop Lanette Plambeck has appointed me to serve Brookings First UMC starting January 1, 2025. From July 1-December 31, 2024 I will serve as a Regional Strategist for Brookings and the surrounding area, a role that will allow me to support Conference and District staff in our connectional mission as well as help me prepare for senior leadership in Brookings upon the departure of their Senior Pastor later this year.

Many of you know I have been preparing to commute to Watertown from Brookings after my upcoming wedding. While this move was not what I anticipated, I trust in God's timing. I am grateful for the ways God continues to lead and guide me, and I am confident this will be a blessing to my family. Even so, I am filled with sadness to leave First Church, as I have been incredibly blessed and grateful to spend these four years serving in Watertown through seasons of challenge and sorrow right alongside seasons of celebration and great joy.

In the midst of my gratitude for all that has been, I find myself living the tension between grief of leaving this place and community I love... and anticipation for what God may have in store for both Watertown and Brookings First United Methodist Churches. Surely God is on the move in ways none of us could expect or anticipate, and I can't wait to see what is yet to come.

In the coming weeks, our Staff-Parish Relations Committee will meet with Rev. Kris Mutzenberger, our District Superintendent. Together, they will begin a conversation about who God is calling to be the next Senior Pastor of First Church, who will work alongside Pastor Bryce as he will be staying as the Associate Pastor. Please join me in holding them in our prayers during this time of transition.

In the same way, I will be holding all of you in my prayers and ask that you will do the same for me. Transitions are not always easy, but together, with God's grace, we can continue to share in the important work of the church.

Thank you for allowing me to journey with you in faith; it has been an incredible privilege to serve as your pastor. I look forward to the next few months together as God prepares us for our next chapters.

In Ministry Together,

Pastor Jen Tyler