

November 5, 2017
HPMF's 40th

Good morning. It's good to see so many guests and friends. I'm going to be reading my reflection today because I have 4 - 5 minutes to reflect on 15 years, and I know what happens when I go off script, time has a way of being extended. However, Kathy did say she would give me one of her minutes.

I came to HPMF as a young man, 27, stayed as pastor until I was 43 (nearing middle-age), and now I'm a few months shy of 70 years. Hyde Park has been a major part of my life. Rebecca and I raised our family here, Nathan was 2 when we came, and Leah was born a couple of years after we arrived, not dissimilar to little Vera Ann Schlagel-Preheim that recently made her arrival.

There was a small gathering, maybe 15, when we began meeting for worship on Sunday evenings, in late August. The circle we sat in was small. I dreamed of a time when Hyde Park would have a regular attendance of 125. I averaged 15 hours preparing for a sermon and today, I still do, even for 5 minutes.

The time was the late 1970s. Viet Nam was over, but barely. The post war aftermath was still very much in emotions of the day.

This description reflects a small chronological timeframe of my years at Hyde Park.

But when I think of HPMF and my pastoral ministry I think not in Chronos time, the time that is linear and measurable. Rather, I think in Kairos time. Having just returned from visiting Greece, I was reminded again of how ancient Greeks had 2 distinct words for time, Chronos (linear) and Kairos (unique time).

Kairos time is not linear, but an appointed time, unusual time, memorable time, it's thin space-time, so to speak, when one catches glimpses of something out of the ordinary. The early Greek converts to Christianity thought of Kairos time as those moments when God was particularly real and meaningful to them; when the reality of God at work in their lives was seen a bit more clearly.

Definitely, when I reflect on pastoral ministry here, I'm drawn to Kairos moments that dotted the landscape of our time together. Here are some that come to mind:

1. I think of Archie Janzen, represented here by his wife Erma, and daughter Brenda. As a school teacher in the Longfellow Elementary, Archie had a kairos vision for an Anabaptist presence in this part of Boise. Out of that vision arose a community center and later this congregation emerged.
2. I think of Ann Hausrath whose passion for peace and justice inspired me, and others, to begin the Boise Interfaith Peace Fellowship that gathered peacemakers from all denominations into a unique voice for the Jesus way of peace. "Let the Xians of the

World Declare, They Will NOT Kill Each Other,” proclaimed the poster that hung in my office for years.

3. I think of Corky Elliot, a retired US Navy vet. represented here today by Carleen and Sydney. Cork came to my office and said it’s not right that BPS is recruiting soldiers in our high schools through the vocational aptitude test the administer to all students. Again, the church spoke, and the test became voluntary and not mandatory.
4. I think too of the kairos moments that happened outside this building--in small Groups that all attendees were encouraged to join, and at winter camp.
5. The scripture songs we sang by heart each Sunday, and the memorization of scripture fueled by our then elder, Katie Hostetler, provided a foundation of Bible awareness that helped us see God a bit more clearly.
6. I think of the dedication of Russ and Janet to our Youth during my pastoral tenure. They could share many kairos moments among the youth they mentored.
7. Greg and Deb Unruh had a kairos moment when they encouraged the church to form a Children’s Church, not unlike the current Godly Play that is now being proposed at HPMF. Children’s church inspired the musical production of “Salty.”

For individual members and friends of HPMF, kairos moments came and went with the good and, and not so good, of life.

1. There were many marriages
2. And a few divorces,
3. There were Babies born
4. And those with painful miscarriages, mostly unspoken, and infertility struggles, mostly hidden.
5. There were Job promotions and job transfers.
6. There were mental health struggles and miraculous recoveries.
7. And there were a whole variety of loses, including Marcia Eigsti’s illness/death that sent me into a spiritual tailspin for quite some time. At the time I was looking for any sign of God to give me assurance, and it came in the form of a great horned owl, I saw this owl just Wednesday over in Hulls Grove, reminding me again that God is indeed faithful and timeless.

My hope, my dream, my deep desire is that HPMF continues to facilitate the kairos moments for each other and the community of Boise.

Blessing:

May the God of history continue to guide HPMF

May the HS of God, the God of thin spaces, and Kairos time continue to inspire HPMF

May Jesus, the Son of God, continue to show HPMF how to love one another and the world.

Amen.

Oh, one other thing, may I recommend purchasing my book, *Called to be a Pastor*. Much of it relates to my years at HPMF. It’s in the back and \$15 will give you a good read