



United Methodist Church of Santa Cruz

A Reconciling Congregation
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Jay K. Pierce, Pastor

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Dear Siblings; Grace and Peace to you from God our Creator, Redeemer, & Sustainer!

I share with you in letter form the announcement I made in worship this morning. On June 30, 2023, I will be entering the retired status of Itinerant Ministry and will retire from the United Methodist Church of Santa Cruz. I anticipate that our new Bishop, who will be assigned on January 1, 2023, will announce the appointment of a new pastor in the spring, who will continue creating ministry with you in Santa Cruz. The new pastor will begin on July 1st. In retirement our family will be moving to Southern California.

I share this information with you now so that you may be in discernment about your future ministry. Our efforts in these last ten years have focused on church growth and spiritual enrichment through small groups; financial sustainability; leadership development; expanding our mission and vision for our community's unhoused residents and the creation of affordable housing on the sacred ground of 17th Avenue.

During these next nine months, as we diligently address the growth, mission and vision, and the stability of our congregation, we will want to also focus on the development of our 17th Avenue property. This growth will take a concerted effort of time, energy, and leadership, working with our Conference Cabinet, the County of Santa Cruz, the Association of Faith Communities, and Sibley Simon.

We have worked to live and serve faithfully in our time together. I am confident that your practice of ministry with our community and the world will continue to make visible the love of Jesus in the days and years ahead.

Know that we are not alone in this time of transition. Be open to the guidance of God's Spirit, as you gain strength through grace! John 14:27 reminds us of these words of assurance from Jesus: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid."

I have also been reminded in a reading this week of the faithfulness of one of the Mystics of Middle Ages, Julian of Norwich, who struggled with issues that plagued her. Through prayer, Julian of Norwich discovered a grace-filled answer: "All shall be well, all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well."

I look forward to being with you to pursue our ministry until I retire. May we lovingly serve God, our community, and the world in the days ahead.

God's Peace, Pastor Jay