Christ the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
600 Shepard Avenue
Hamden, CT

June 14, 2021

Dear Friends,

I write to you with a joyful and grateful heart to say thanks once again for the privilege and opportunity to serve as your transition pastor. For the cherished relationships formed, for the ways you remained open and available to the Spirit's leading, for your courage and faithfulness along the way, for the joys and sorrows, the laughter and the tears we shared, and for the constructive, life giving steps you have taken toward a promising future, I am grateful.

Now you are poised to step into a new stage of your life together as a new, still emerging congregation. You are blessed with strong, faithful leaders, with a spirit of warm hospitality and eager anticipation. You are a gifted and beautiful gathering of God's people. You are a congregation with a big heart. And I am excited for you as you move into these new days. I am confident that your future is bright. I know you will welcome your new pastor with eager, expectant and supportive arms, and that you will together develop a strong partnership in growing a ministry that will bear bold witness to the God who loves us beyond all measure and who calls us to serve others with that same love we receive.

And thanks so much for the extremely generous farewell gift you presented me yesterday, and for the happy, festive lunch following worship. What a joy it was to share those moments with you.

Please know that I will continually hold you all in my heart with prayers of thanksgiving and love, and that I will wholeheartedly cheer you on in the days ahead.

With gratitude for you and to God for life and ministry we were graced to share together,

Les Swenson

P.S. For those who were not able to join the congregation for worship yesterday, you may find the text of yesterday's sermon on the church website: christgoodshepherdlutheran.org. It is a fuller song of gratitude for our life together.