

# The Pastor's Report

Sisters and brothers far and near; greetings!

Well, I don't mind telling you that this is my *least* favorite time of year. Yes, winter is hard (though we've made it to February, so if not necessarily "over the hump" we are certainly cresting the hill) but the real challenge is getting all the administrative ducks in a row to close out the previous year as a church and launch ourselves into the next. I am speaking here of budgets, Annual Reports, Annual Meeting and statistical reporting.

Unsurprisingly, I'm not big into administration. Frankly, I find it burdensome and unfulfilling. More a necessary evil than a virtue unto itself. I remember the first time I ran into the term, "Administrative Leadership." The context was the list of skills, attributes, or experiences a church was looking for in a pastor, or a person seeking a pastoral position might possess. I thought to myself, that is oxymoronic as there is no such thing as "Administrative Leadership." Oh, I understand the reasoning behind it, but from my perspective the goal and role of an "Administrator" is to *minimize* risk, while the responsibility of a "Leader" is to *take* risks. Clearly, someone somewhere had completely misunderstood the role of the latter in favor of the former; almost certainly an Administrator themselves.

Point being, I do not relish the annual task of collecting and compiling the numerous annual reports (though everyone has been great in getting their reports turned in, thank you, HUGE help), working with spreadsheets and budgets, or articulating how many 4 to 12 year olds we have in the church (etc.) and filing statistical reports with the denomination/Presbytery

just so they can feel like *they* are doing something. However, once we got the Annual Reports completed I was reviewing them one last time before printing/emailing and I thought to myself, "No Mike, this is a good and important thing to do every year."

Something I always tell those who are seeking a call to ministry is to ask for the church's Annual Reports for the past five years for any church with whom they are interviewing. Otherwise, one only has the "Church Information Form" (CIF) to go on in assessing if a church would be a good fit. However, the CIF is what a church *thinks* it is or *hopes* itself to be. The Annual Report is what the church is in *actuality*. Given this way of understanding, I must say that our "actuality" is pretty darn good if not downright excellent.

Please know how appreciative I am of each of you for having a hand in bringing our church to a great fruition again this year. When I say everyone, I do mean *everyone*. There is no task, no role, no intent, no act or gesture, no prayer, no kindness that isn't included in who we are being as a church. Everything, and everyone matters in our church. Thank you!

With joyous expectation for our future,  
- Rev. Mike

PS - I would like to say how much I enjoyed getting my chops busted by those in attendance in worship on the 26th. Just as we started the service *everyone* moved down to the front of the church (including the choir). Frankly, I've never been in a worship service where everyone sat in the front. Moreover, I've never known a congregation that would, or could, do such a thing; especially just for the fun of it. VERY SNEAKY! VERY FUNNY! Keep it coming!

"What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?" - Romans 8:31