



From the Desk of Pastor Rachel

Dear RC UMC Friends,

Today I find myself looking back at the last nine months since I first arrived here in Richland Center and marveling at how much we have accomplished together in such a short time. Now that we have celebrated our first Easter Sunday as the Richland Center United Methodist Church and will fully finalized the unification process in our Special Church/Charge Conference on April 8th, it seems like a good time to take a moment to appreciate the amazing ways that God has been at work in our church and our lives.

It seems nothing short of miraculous that we, after more than 100 years of intentional separateness, were able to bring two distinct and historic congregations together to become one. And that by all appearances, our unification is going remarkably well. Our attendance on Sunday mornings is holding steady so that we're full enough to feel like a vibrant church and still have room to welcome others to join us. You can feel the hope and optimism in the atmosphere which people tell me makes them look forward to Sunday mornings in ways they haven't for a while.

Thanks to some of our new members, special music has once again become a regular feature on Sunday mornings, and we have even started a small-but-mighty chancel choir! And, as if that weren't already enough, very soon we will also be welcoming a new sound system to help us all hear the services better. These are just a few of the positive additions that we can all be thankful for.

Of course, there have been sad times as well over these last nine months. We have lost some beloved members of our community and still mourn their passing. As we have moved forward into our new identity, we have had to say goodbye to some of our cherished memories and beloved traditions from the past. So, even with all the good news we have to celebrate, we also remember that everyone heals in their own way and in their own time, and we are mindful that patience and compassion are also to be found in our new community of faith. Many thanks to those among us who have been providing their ministry of love and support for others in need.

But, overall, we have much to be thankful for and much to look forward to. I am so very grateful for the faithfulness and courage of our church leaders and all our members who have worked diligently to bring us to this point. And most of all, I give thanks to the LORD our God, who hasn't given up on us and clearly has a grand plan and purpose for the RC UMC!

With my heartfelt gratitude and blessings to all,

Pastor Rachel

PS -- Don't forget to mark your calendar for April 7th when our worship time changes to 10:00 AM CDT.