

Retirement

I have a secret to share with you. I never wanted to be a minister. For the Centennial parade in Elgin in 1967, my cousin and I dressed up as Circuit Riding preachers and galloped down the street on our horses, encouraging people to go to church! (but probably not in those words) That was as close as I ever wanted to get to becoming one!

I was determined, as was Heather, to become a high school physical education teacher and go to the same university as **my** phys ed teachers.

I was raised in the church and with my family, participated actively in the life of the church.

But career wise, things went a different route. After doing my Masters degree I worked in Sports Administration and then social work.

The idea of becoming a minister was planted while in exile to Kapuskasing, by my minister Rev. David Sherbino, Joel's father. I wanted nothing to do with it. He insisted on bringing it up from time to

time. And eventually it became an obsession ... I dreamt about it. I thought about it all the time even though I tried desperately not to.

When I finally called my parents and told them I was thinking of going to a seminary, just for a year, my mother began to sob. When I asked her what was wrong, she told me that she had been praying all of my life, that I would become a minister ... I had no idea!

After 3 years of study, Heather and I, full of excitement left for Nova Scotia for a 2 year appointment. 7 years later, following a year of exchange with a minister in New Zealand, in the spring of 1993, we arrived at Trinity.

It has been a wonderful adventure. Humbling, vibrant, difficult, joyous, exhilarating. We moved from one service to two and back to one. We built a beautiful new church. We have been together through weddings, baptisms, confirmations, ordination of elders, welcoming of new members, funerals, weddings, and so much more. You have invited me into your homes, your hospital rooms, and your lives. I am

humbled. To have been invited so deeply into the lives of so many people, not only in this church but also in this marvellous community has been a blessing and a responsibility which fills me with immense gratitude.

This is the only church our three children have ever really known. They have been loved and encouraged here. Hannah was baptized here and all three were confirmed here. Their faith has its foundation here.

You have been very generous with your support, patience, forgiveness and your love. I hope you have felt some of that coming in your direction over the past 27 years.

After much prayer, discussion and reflection, Heather and I have come to a very difficult decision. Never in my wildest dreams did I imagine taking this step in the midst of a global pandemic, but here it is.

I am **happily, and very reluctantly**, moving into another chapter of my life. My final service with you will be Christmas Eve.

You will continue to have a very prominent place in my heart, as a congregation, a community, and members of those. You are my friends.

Thank you for allowing me to be a part of your journey thus far.

God bless you as you continue that journey.

Thank you.