



Forever Grateful

I am sitting in my church office looking at my calendar. When I see that today is May 13th, I find it hard to believe that I have exactly one month left to serve you as your pastor. I am blessed with so many great memories of my 17 years serving First UMC Moorestown. So many of your beautiful faces pass through my thoughts, and I remember them fondly. Although it has been a long time, I still remember the anxiety I had the day Gary and I arrived here carrying our 2 year old twins. I was not only going to be the first woman but

also the first Korean pastor to serve this very white congregation. The fears I carried with me quickly disappeared though when I got to meet with you face to face.

I quickly found out that First UMC in Moorestown is a dream church and any pastor would be blessed to serve here. Even though I was your pastor, I learned more from you each and every day on how to serve the Lord and to love others. The beautiful thing was that you preached to me through your actions. You not only allowed me to try new ideas and programs, you assisted and supported me through them. Even though they weren't always successful I never felt judged by you. Thank you for allowing me to be myself and to grow as a pastor.

Whenever I felt discouraged or was struggling with some type of concern or issue in my life, I visited some of you, sometimes without notice, and was able to find some peace. Your doors always seemed to be open, and I was greeted with genuine hospitality. I truly enjoyed the tea and cookies you served in your kitchens and the food shared from your gardens.

During my time here you taught me how to garden, how to knit, how to cook, but most importantly, you taught me how to laugh and love. I have become a better pastor because of the lessons and experiences you have shared with me.

I remember each one of you fondly. I remember the days we laughed together, the days we wept together, the times I held some of your hands as one of your loved ones were taking their last breath. I remember the days when some of you were born and have had the pleasure of holding the newborns. We have grown so close during my time here. I truly feel many of you have become like a mother, father, sister, or brother to me. Those I have watched grow up in our church feel like my children.

As I depart from this wonderful congregation, I will always remember you as you hold a very special spot in my heart. I know that God will continue to bless this congregation. I am strongly convinced that God has a great and special plan for First UMC Moorestown. Along with your new pastors Gina and Jessica you will achieve that plan.

May God bless you my beloved. I am forever grateful to you!

HeyYoung Horton



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