

It's Hard to Say Goodbye...

It's hard to believe that I'm sitting down to write this, my final article for "The Shepherd's Staff". It was only a year ago that I wrote my first one. Thank you so much for allowing me into your church and into your lives over the past year. What a year it has been! Together we have witnessed many joys in the congregation: births, graduations, Christmas and Easter, VBS, and other celebrations just to name a few. It goes without saying, however, that the trials of the past year have at times seemed to overshadow these joys. I am grieved that I leave you now in the wake of such pain, but I pray that God will restore you to peace.

Thank you to the youth of this congregation for your vitality, eagerness, spunk, and friendship. I love you all and will miss you very much! Thank you also to the families (especially the parents!) who will be carrying on the youth programs in my absence. I have faith that you will all do well, both at Good Shepherd and in life. Just keep your eyes focused on God and His plans, and your life will glorify God!

Thank you to the many leaders and volunteers of the congregation who have helped to make my job here a little bit easier over the past year. I cannot thank you enough! I would especially like to thank Rose Shirer and Roxanne Lindgren for their leadership, friendship, and support. Thanks also go to Jason Tost for his very specialized assistance that I couldn't have possibly received from anyone else, because he's been in these shoes before.

Finally, I would like to thank my co-workers on the church staff. To those who have left before me, Doug and Judy, thank you for your friendship, and I wish you nothing but the very best in all of your future ventures. Mary K, I know we've barely gotten a chance to know each other, but I thank you for the short time that we did have, and I wish you all the best in your music ministry here at Good Shepherd. Bernadine, thanks is not sufficient enough a word to describe my appreciation for all that you have done. From the job-related tasks to our little office chats, the quiet days in the office were definitely more enjoyable because you were around. I hope that everyone appreciates just what you do for this congregation, and I hope that you are never taken for granted by anyone. Finally, I would like to thank Pastor Ash. I do not even know where to begin. You have been one of the best mentors, ministry colleagues, bosses, teachers, and friends that I have ever had. I pray that God will continue to strengthen you in your ministry. Church, this man is a true man of God, fallible though he may be, as we all are. I pray that he may continue to serve you for many years.

I encourage you all to keep in touch! I may be leaving Good Shepherd, but I don't want to leave your lives that quickly. I encourage you all to email me at Hediru@gmail.com or friend me on Facebook and let me know how your lives are going. Thank you to the entire congregation for your many prayers and friendship! This congregation still is one of the "homiest" churches that I have served, and that's one of the reasons that it hurts so much to leave you. May God continue to bless you, and give you peace.

Agape,

Heather Runser