

The famous words from Ecclesiastes 3 I thought was a good place to begin today. We are saying farewell to Heidi Griffith, our music director and her husband Ryan, and it feels like an era in the life of this congregation is coming to a close. There is no doubt about that. Heidi has been here 8 years and she has been a part of tremendous changes. But it is also a time to look at changes in general.

People come and go from this congregation all the time. Just last week we had a newcomer - Thomas Bullwinkle. The week before someone left us - Pru Pennypacker. With each person's coming something new is brought and the whole community changes, perhaps ever so slightly, but it changes as that person's influence comes to be. Similarly with each person's leaving the whole community changes. Perhaps with someone like Heidi that change feels dramatic and for others not so much, but the point is that this community is always dynamic and changing.

We do well to remember that the church throughout the world is similarly dynamic and changing. Generations rise and fall

but the church of Christ continues, ever dynamic. The church spans the globe, it stretches into the past, and it reaches into the future God has for it. Remember, you've heard me say before that it is a mistake to say that the church of Jesus Christ has a mission. This is wrong. The church of Jesus Christ does not have a mission. We've got it backwards. *The mission of Jesus Christ has a church.* When we embrace that as our understanding of our community of faith we are well prepared to move into God's future.

Many have said to me in the last several weeks that they don't know what we'll do without Heidi, that her accompaniment and interpretation of music is has become part of the heart and soul of this congregation. That is probably true. Music drives the pace and mood of a worship experience like nothing else can. But there are other musicians out there who can come into this community of faith.

Will they take her place? No. They will bring something different. In some ways it will be better, in some ways it will be worse.

I have one real hope, and as long as that is met all will be well. We have entrusted Heidi with a great sacred and spiritual trust these last eight years - the music ministry of this congregation; the melody, harmony, and rhythm of us. She has honored that trust very well. I will be forever thankful to her for that. I hope that whoever comes after her will prove to be equally trustworthy; because ultimately a music director is not a job. It is a sacred trust.

Finally, a word from our gospel reading. Jesus said, "Let your light shine before others, so they may see your good works and give glory to your father in heaven." Whether you are a music director or a pastor, or a teacher, or a janitor, or a politician, or a factory worker, or a little kid, you have been given a sacred trust by God. God made you good. God did not make a mistake. You have a light to shine, so let it shine - whether people celebrate it or not.

Heidi's light may not be shining as a part of this congregation in the future, but as long as she is letting it shine she is honoring the trust God has in her. She is contributing to the mission of Jesus Christ - a mission of which

we are all a part, of which we will always be a part, and of  
which we can always rejoice in each other whether nearby or far  
away. Amen