

## **For the HIP Church – from Rev. Ron**

Welcome to my first column for the church newsletter. I have been asked to write about what it means to be a bi-vocational pastor, and I welcome your thoughts on what it means to be a congregation with a bi-vocational minister.

When asked how he would describe bi-vocational ministry after a year of having a bi-vocational pastor, a member of the church that I served said, "It's like having a full-time pastor at the cost of a part-time one." To this, I say, "Yes and no."

Having a bi-vocational minister is like having a full-time pastor insofar as the pastor leads worship, provides pastoral care and organizes the things that pastors organize, like session meetings and other events. By now, you've probably noticed that I am a planner. I plan worship services well in advance and do my best to bundle opportunities for ministry and mission. Thank you for your flexibility in doing the usual things at different times and being open to new experiences.

Flexibility is the name of the game when one hopes to have a thriving bi-vocational ministry starting with how one chooses to connect with one's pastor. Since a part-time minister is not at the church as often as a full-time minister is, calls, texts and emails become more important. At the same time, it's a natural progression in a digital age.

If you haven't done so, please program my cell number into your phone right now (276-477-0000), and feel free to call or text me any time, understanding that if I am not available, I will reach back out as soon as I can.

Consider me a member of your inner circle, your spiritual leader, a trusted advisor and a good friend. I want to laugh, celebrate and cry with you. I want to help you heal. I want to be the pastor who brings this congregation together to do great things for one another and the community God has called us to serve. My prayer is that we will always be the church that God calls us to be to God's glory.

Blessings, Ron