



September 2019

Dear Church Family,

One year ago, my children were playing in the giant cardboard fort Jordan and I had duct-taped together from discarded moving boxes. One year ago, we needed GPS to get groceries. One year ago, we discovered that “getting rolled” is actually good thing. One year ago, we began learning your names...and we’re still learning! One year ago, Hattiesburg became home and First Pres. became family. Over the last twelve months, Jordan and I have sung and re-sung those old Talking Head lyrics to each other, “Well, how did I get here?” And the answer we keep coming back to is - by the amazing grace of God!

Though words fail to express our heartfelt gratitude, you won’t blame me for trying! Thank you, dear church, for taking a chance on a boy-preacher from Florida. Thank you for welcoming us into your hearts and homes with your hallmark, arms-wide-open, hospitality. Thank you for loving my family so well. We have never been happier in Christ because we have never been more embraced by His Body, the church. Thank you for trusting me with your pulpit and receiving the preached Word with gladness. Thank you for demanding to see Jesus, Sunday by Sunday. Thank you for trusting me with your stories, hurts, and hopes and allowing me into your lives to be your shepherd. Thank you for the inestimable privilege of marrying, burying and baptizing your loved ones. Thank you for the most rewarding and thrilling year of our lives. Thank you, most of all, for praying for us as our roots have begun to settle beside yours here in Hattiesburg.

I am more excited than ever to link arms with you all and charge ahead after the glory of Jesus Christ in Hattiesburg, confident the best is yet to come! One of the ways I hope to bless you is through monthly pastoral letters covering a range of topics pertaining to Christian faith and practice. In the meantime, if there is anything I can do to serve you or anything specific for which I can be praying, please don’t hesitate to contact me or drop by and see me at church!

Your grateful servant,