

First Presbyterian Church
West Grand Avenue at Church Street
Since 1741

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The Reverend Erin M. Hayes-Cook, Pastor

December 8, 2021

Re: Resignation

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

When Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt he did not know how long they would be in the wilderness together. He followed the Lord's leading and helped them move past bondage and into God's promise. When they didn't have enough food God gave them manna, daily bread each day. Moses went to the mountaintop to talk with God and came down to share where they were to go. He loved them, watched their families grow, helped them say goodbye to those who died and pointed them towards the future even when the disorientation of nighttime seemed to prevail. I am not Moses, but I relate to his mission and leadership. At the right time, when God asked, Moses let the next leader take over the ministry to God's people. And just like him I know that it is my time to leave you to your next leader.

I am writing to share with you that I have accepted a call to be Designated Pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Hackettstown, NJ. This congregation is located an hour west of here. Their congregation is located in the center of the small town and are excited about ministry in their ever-changing context. This move will also bring us closer to a portion of our family. We are excited about what God will do in ministry at Hackettstown.

It has been my joy to be the first installed pastor of the merged congregation over these past almost 9 years. We have laughed, cried, prayed, sang, discerned and moved through challenges and triumphs. My hope is that you know I have put my heart into walking alongside you in these years of our journey. I grieve leaving as your Pastor, you have been written upon my heart.

My last in person worship will be Sunday, January 2, 2022. I will be tying up loose ends in the office over the week after Christmas. We plan to move over the month of January. I look forward to sharing with you this beloved season of Advent and Christmas Eve worship. This time of year holds so much hope for all of us.

In Christ's love-

Erin Hayes-Cook