

Reflections on the Shared Journey–

This past week marked Bridget Klug's 5th anniversary on staff as Administrative Assistant and Financial Secretary. It goes without saying that she is a valued member of the staff team and an irreplaceable resource to this congregation. The effectiveness of her ministry is reflected in how well she is loved and respected.

This coming week marks a milestone for John Moran. 10 years ago, John joined the staff as a part-time pianist for our children's choirs. During the past 5 years, John's ministry has grown from that limited role to leader of the Praise Team and the Celebration Service, to accompanist for worship and the Sounds of Grace Choir, to head of the A/V team and Recording Ministry. The growth in John's responsibilities parallels his growth as a follower of Christ and as a leader in this congregation. We are blessed through his many abilities and through the willing spirit out of which he serves.

We are blessed to have quality staff members at SJA. Bridget and John are but two of them. All bring great gifts to their role, serving with a generous spirit. Our growth in numbers and in ministry is a testimony to the quality of their work alongside of you. I trust you will join me in affirming all the members of our staff and their work, especially Bridget and John as they mark these anniversaries.

The ministry of the staff team is augmented by the quality of leadership drawn from the congregation. With the beginning of this new calendar year, new leaders rotate into leadership positions.

John Oberkrom becomes the chair of the Leadership Council and the Council of Stewards, replacing Mike Backman. Mike offered COS a steady hand and a quiet wisdom. John will guide the Leadership Council in a re-visioning process as we prepare for the next 3-5 years.

Kris Crabtree replaces Sari Hughes as the 8:30 Lay Leader while Matt Hatley replaces Dori Young as the 11:00 Lay Leader. Sari and Dori were both vital contributors to our life together and to the Executive Leadership Team in their Lay Leaders role. Kris and Matt will bring their own gifts to these roles.

Don Collins assumes the chair of SPR, replacing Doug Crabtree. Don understands the vital role the members of the staff team play in the life and growth of SJA. He is committed to supporting them and their work.

Laurie Walkenhorst brings a passion for small groups and spiritual formation as she takes over as chair of the Adult Ministries team.

Kathy Robinson is committed to helping people find their place in the life of SJA – a commitment she will live out as chair of Assimilation.

Joe Stenger brings a history of involvement in mission work to his position as chair of Missions.

Bill and Wendy Lattner take over the leadership of the Supper Club, helping people establish relationships and build friendships through this fellowship group.

Brian Certain has assumed the leadership of the SJA Emmaus Community, bringing renewed energy and passion to this United Methodist renewal program.

These begin their leadership roles, working alongside others who are already serving. Through their leadership – as we work together as partners with God in God's work – we will *take the next step, to the next level* in ministry and growth.

I look forward to all that God will do in us and among us and through us in the coming year. I'll see you in worship this Sunday, expecting God's good work.

Grace and peace, Steve