

## STAYING IN TOUCH

Dear Friend:

It is definitely with mixed emotions that I write my final In Touch. By now all of you should know that this past December I informed the congregation that I would be retiring from the pastoral ministry on March 30, 2025. God has allowed me to serve in this capacity for a total of 43 years, 35 at Franklin. Just the other day I realized that I actually started preaching 50 years ago. I first preached at my church camp, then local and state-wide youth rallies, then the pastor at my church let me fill the pulpit on occasion starting when I was 16 years old! This decision to retire March 30th came after much, much prayer and soul searching.

What does my future hold? I don't know exactly but I know who holds my future: God. I just know that it is time to step-aside from the duties of senior pastoring. Who knows, perhaps my future will be working with/tutoring kids, possible Chaplain work, possibly missions work but staying in New Albany. I am 66 years old but full retirement just doesn't yet entice me.

There are two main purposes in writing this In Touch. First, details about retirement from the pastorate. Second, to remind you how In Touch got started. How did it get started? It's all about COVID 19. Back in April of 2020 I put together a team to "get us through COVID 19". We met and someone came-up with the idea of a weekly devotional to "stay in touch"; so, I decided to start writing this and called it In Touch.

We got really creative as a church and stayed connected well. Someone led a Sunday morning phone call that allowed as many as we wanted to talk with each other and hold a prayer meeting. I began preaching a message on Facebook and that was loaded onto our website. We held a drive-in Easter service, covered well by local T.V. stations. The monthly newsletter (The Messenger) gave information that helped us stay in touch. We re-opened in May of 2020, the second church to re-open in the area. I've said it before and want to say it again...we did a great job of keeping in touch during COVID, way to go everyone!

Speaking of staying in touch, stay in touch with Chris and I after March 30th. My phone number will be the same: 614-668-7168. Best email will be [Rooftoprev1@att.net](mailto:Rooftoprev1@att.net). We can always visit at church. I plan to attend our church Easter and the Sunday after. But, for a couple months I will also be visiting churches where colleagues are preaching. From Lancaster to Indiana and points in-between. I intend to be at Vanwert United Brethren Church on Pastor Mike Burtnett's first Sunday. Let's stay in touch.

In Christ's Love,

Pastor Mike

Prayer: Pastor Nick Moonis, begins preaching April 6th, Pastor Mike Burtnett and family as they move from Florida to Vanwert and he begins preaching, Dick Fisher (brain tumor), Brenda Carpenter (Atrial Fibrillation, fluid on the heart)

Events: Men's Breakfast Friday, 6:45 a.m.; MOVIE - *The Last Supper* 1:45 p.m. Saturday...It's not too late to go and we are making this a church trip outing. Movies 16 Stoneridge Plaza, (Morse & Hamilton Rd).