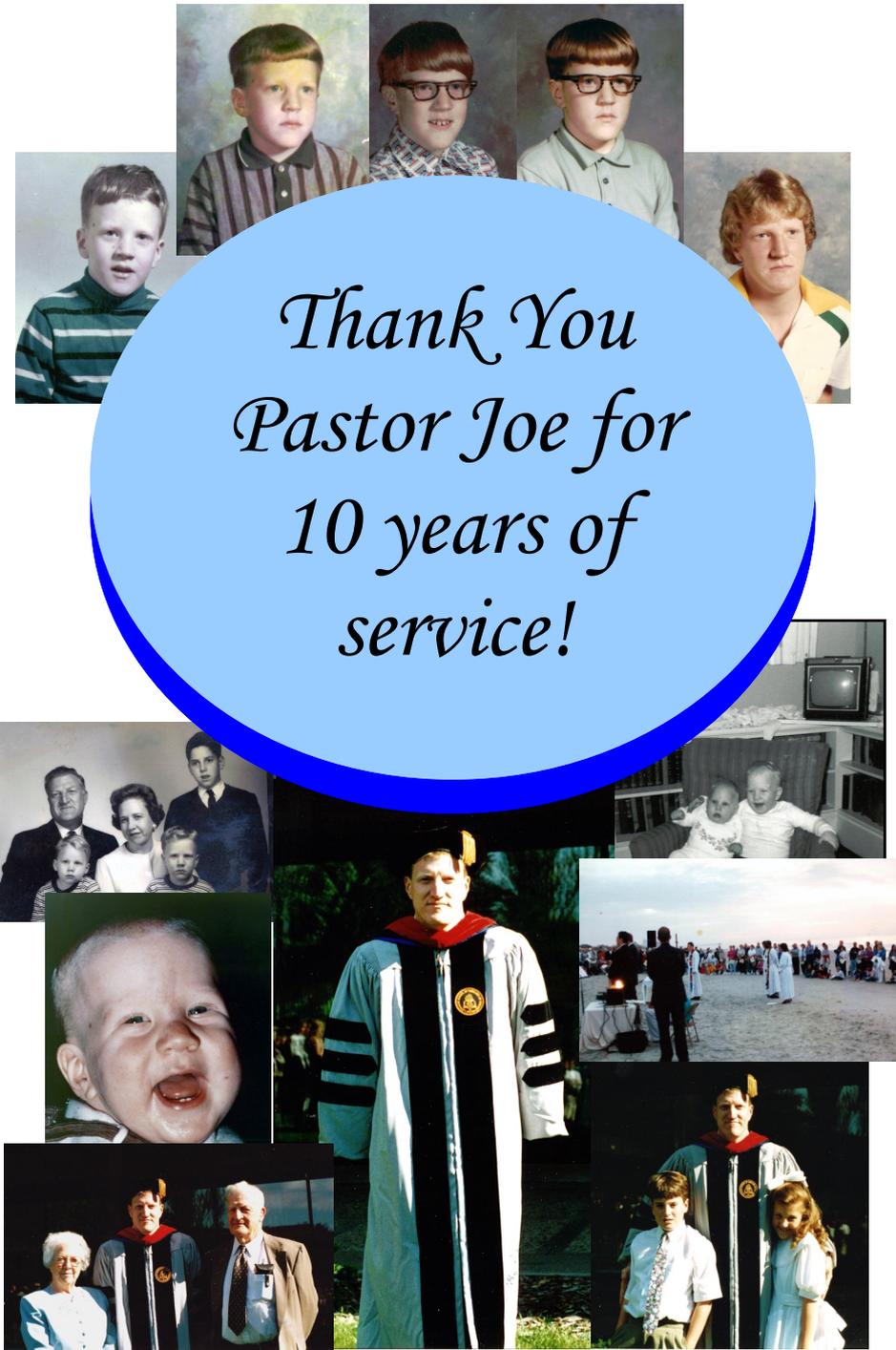




Joseph G. Crowther
September 4, 1963



*In Appreciation
from
Atonement
Lutheran Church*



*9948 Metcalf Avenue
Overland Park, KS 66212
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Pastor Joe,

Our family wants to thank you for the wonderful ministry you have provided our family and Atonement. You bless us in so many ways, and we are grateful for your guidance and wisdom.

You have an amazing talent for delivering God's message with excitement and humor. We especially have fond memories of you officiating Jill and Joe's wedding ceremony. You are such a warm and caring person. We wish you all

the best and want you to know we are very fortunate to have you leading our congregation.

Many Blessings,
The Aberdeens—Jeff & Kathy



PJ,

What a wonderful 10 years it has been for Atonement! Your vision has led, and will lead this church to new and better ways of doing ministry while keeping those traditions that we love. We thank our God for your service.

Hebrews 12:1

Jan and Dennis Allerheiligen



20th Ordination Celebration



Dear Pastor Joe,

The whole Anderson family wants to say congratulations and thanks for your ten years at Atonement. From the bottom of our hearts we want you to know how grateful we are that you are our pastor.

Congratulations are due for what you have accomplished at Atonement. The Spirit-filled worship and wonderful thought-provoking messages from the pulpit have made Atonement a church where anyone who seeks God can find God.

Every time we are blessed to hear you preach we marvel at your insight and how you can connect with each of us. So often I have looked around and seen a tear in the eye of someone touched by your words. You have driven all of us to make Atonement a caring, outward-looking church that does turn around, look outside, and go make Faith happen. We are definitely “not just a Sunday church”.

As we reflect on your ten years here, what we feel more than anything is gratitude. As a family you have shaped our Faith, each of us and all of us. We all see God more clearly and feel Jesus in our lives in ways that we never would have without you. Because of the ages of our kids, you have been our pastor for the most important decade in our family's Faith journey. As parents, Denise and I sought a church where God was real and our kids would feel the Holy Spirit. You arrived when they were just beginning to understand life's big questions and you have made Atonement be that place. Our kids have built life-long relationships with Jesus because of what you have taught and showed them.

Examples abound. Just tonight, Maggie reminded me of a few of the childhood stories that you have used in your sermons and how she recalls what you wanted her to learn from them. Jacob loves that you are, in his words “less of a preacher, more of a shepherd”. He loves to listen to you preach because it is from your heart, “not what someone told you is right but what you believe and know is right”.

Sam has become a quiet leader in high school. He leads with his Faith, much like you with your collar off.

For me, you have provided an example of a spirit-filled life that I can try to model, although I always come up short. I have appreciated your friendship and marveled at the effort you put in, even when there were other things on your mind. I have enjoyed every lunch and hike that we have shared and hope for many more.

Years ago you taught us that the proper response when someone asks how we are, is "Grateful!". We are.

Thanks,

Pete, Denise, Jacob, Maggie and Sam Anderson



Pastor Joe,

Your ministry here has been a blessing to us. Phyllis and I can hardly believe you have been here as our minister for 10 years. Time really flies by quickly.

Thank you for your service and may God continue to bless you and your ministry.

Pastor Joe –

We have been truly blessed to have you be a part of our lives. Through marriage, baptisms and serving at Atonement the past years with you have been very impactful. We are grateful for your amazing spirit and joy that you give each day. Thank you for your dedication and commitment to our immediate family and church family.

Sincerely,

Aaron, Kelly, Avery & Lucas Wiens

Thanks!!



Pastor Joe-

You work vigorously to give us comfort and direction. Mark and I appreciated the guidance and leadership you provided us throughout our engagement and on our wedding day. It was so special for us that you were a part of such a big day in our lives. You do so much for our congregation and we truly appreciate your 10 years of service.

God bless-

Emily and Mark Webster



Dear Pastor Joe,

Thank you for being all God called you to be!

You're more than just a pastor, you're what Martin Luther would call "das Allerbest" (the best)!

*We are very blessed to have you as our Pastor and friend.
May God continue to bless you in your ministry at
Atonement.*

Blessings, Jim & Daye Dalbec



Joe,

Atonement Lutheran Church was blessed the day you came to join our family of believers! The messages you bring each Sabbath are full of life and hope and joy. Touring the countryside of Europe with you has been splendid. Happiness is a very old wish, but it is our wish for you!

Soar high, Randy and Diana Foster



Dear Pastor Joe,

We have had the privilege of being long time members and seeing Atonement move from folding chairs in a small "study" room for worship into a large comfortable facility.

We have been preached to and administered to by all the different pastors. It would be hard to single out one whose presence and leadership resonated more than another. But, you certainly would rate at the top.

Your ten year anniversary gives us, one and all, an opportunity to acknowledge your fine care and leadership. Thank you.

Sincerely, Gene & Betty Waechter

Pastor Joe,

Jeff and I grew up in SD and are usually gone for most holidays. So over the years we've always had to go there for family holidays. Easter has always been one where we stay in Kansas City. Given our kids don't get any time off over Easter from school, we don't make the trek. We've convinced my family to come here then for Easter. Since Joe started at Atonement, my oldest sister and mom insist we have Easter in Kansas City since they thoroughly enjoy our service (especially the music). So they drive 12 hours to attend the service every year and my mom is at the 11 AM service an hr early to get a good seat! So keep up the Easter Extravaganza.

Cheers,

Kathy, Jeff, Matt, Brit and Ben Hoffman

Dear Pastor Joe,

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for the many blessings you have bestowed on me and continue to do so. When Bob died suddenly, although he had been sick and on dialysis for 4 years, we thought he was going in for rehab after his latest stroke and died suddenly. We called the church at 7 at night and you came and joined us at the hospital immediately. You said the perfect things to us and were a comfort that day and at the funeral. Since then I have been able to be more active at church and you never cease to amaze me. You have been through so many life changing, heart wrenching, heart stopping moments, and yet continue to show us your faith. You lead so much by example. If you can go through all this, then maybe we can too. I can't stress this enough. You are calm, soft spoken, smiling when I'm sure your heart is breaking. I love your stories of your childhood and times on the farm and things you learned from your dad. I still laugh to myself when I remember the time I saw you on a sat morning and you said "you can't wait to hear what the preacher was going to say that afternoon!" Most of us would be nervous. You have such faith and skill that God will always put the right words in your mouth to be a blessing to us all.

I hope you are with us for many years to come, at least long enough to do my funeral. I tell my kids that I keep doing goofy things so they can say "did you hear what mom did this time?" and that they have lots of funny stories to tell at my funeral. I'm sure you could add a few. I met Jill at Easter and she is such a delightful woman. I'm so glad you are moving on with your life. I hope she or someone else will be able to join you in the future to share your life. I know how hard it is to always be alone. I have many friends and try to do many things, but it is not the same alone. I remember standing at the Grand Canyon, surrounded by strangers and wishing I had someone close to me to share the experience with besides my dog. So my blessings to you in whatever you choose to do and with whomever that is, just as long as it is still at Atonement!!

May God always hold you in the palm of his hand.

Sherlyn Vaupell

Dear Pastor Joe:

Thank you for watching over your Atonement flock during the past ten years. Thank you also for encouraging us to grow deep and reach wide as we try to be the church outside of Atonements walls.

The following words on peace are from *Apples of Gold*, compiled by Jo Perry: " (1) In His will is our peace; (2) Take with you words, strong words of courage, words that have wings! Take with you holy words, words that know God, words that are sacred as healing waters, pure as light, and beautiful as morning. Take with you tall words, words that reach up, and growing words, with deep life within them. Take with you holy words, words that know God. "

Love, Nanette and Paul Gafrick

Pastor Joe,

Thanks for your 10 amazing years of service at Atonement! We will always remember that you started the day after Jacob was baptized. We've watched you grow and change Atonement as our children have grown and changed. Thank you for all that you do!

The Essers -

Chris, Nikki, Jacob, Jordan, Emerson

PJ,

In addition to being a knockout preacher you are pretty good with a camera; so we couldn't pass up the opportunity to present your classic picture from our Scandinavian adventure. There have been a lot of laughs and tears since that day and we thank you for being a Pastor and friend through many adventures. We love you dearly...even with the pleats.

Tré, Maryann & Caden Grace



Pastor Joe,

I was a member of the Call Committee when Joe was hired. I fondly remember traveling to Myrtle Beach, to hear him, and evaluate the possible hiring.

To make the group less visible, we split, and sat in different areas of his church. Two gentlemen sitting behind me were chatting before the service, and one said "wait til you hear this guy, he is great-our biggest worry is keeping him" Little did they know that I was there to take him away.

Small world. . .Dave Thompson

Pastor Joe,

Congratulations!

I appreciate the many blessings you have brought to Atonement. Under your leadership we have become a praying church, as well as a church reaching out to the community. I am so thankful that you were lead to pastor here at Atonement.

Sincerely,

Marlene Vollink

Pastor Joe,

Amid the busyness of our everyday lives, it's easy for the faith tank to slide toward empty. Exhausted by a week of work, chasing the kids and other obligations, it's tempting to stay home and do nothing on Sundays. But your weekly words of wisdom inspire us to gather at Atonement. Your belief in us helps us recharge our batteries. Your sermons stir the soul, and by "standing on our heads", we are inspired to take what you teach us and apply it to our own lives so we can find happiness through our faith and through helping others. Transforming Atonement into a missional church is a stroke of genius, and we are proud to be a part of a congregation so willing to help those in need. Thank you for all your hard work. We know you've had your own challenges these past ten years. While we're thankful you have been there for us and our spiritual needs, we're also honored and humbled to be able to be there for you. God bless, and we look forward to spending the next ten years with you as well!

The Stewart's —
Matt, Chrissy, Jackson, Alex and Madeline

PJ,

For the guidance and shepherding you provided over 4 years ago while I 'wrestled with the Holy Spirit' through leaving my recruiting job and taking the leap into ministry, I am SO incredibly grateful. I may not have started down the right road (me, Ordained? HA!) but I certainly ended up in the right spot. Thankfully you gave me the grace to find my way into a place within the church that I absolutely love. It continues to amaze me how I can sense the Holy Spirit working through you each and every Sunday as you teach us...as you told me in the very, very beginning, 'find your voice' and you certainly do that well. What comes from your mouth is clearly God-breathed. We have such an amazing gift in you! You are my Pastor that teaches and shepherds me, Boss (☺) that empowers me, and a friend who encourages me. Atonement (and I) are incredibly lucky to have you around! Lots o' love!

*Brad,
Brooke,
Tyson,
& Noah
Hodnefield*



Pastor Joe,

Thank you Pastor Joe for being such a wonderful influence, leader, and speaker of God's word. You first hooked me with your Sermon comparing Super Bowl Sunday and the 7 Deadly Sins; I've never forgotten how skilled you are at relating your sermons and the Word to what happens in our everyday lives. Happy Anniversary!!

Jessy Johnson

Brother Joe,

I think Atonement has been under the same management for 50 years. Guest speakers are called and brought into the church to tell us when to stand and when to sit. No matter where I am (on a tour bus with you or sitting in a pew) this 10 year journey with you has been terrific. I love your God given ability to tell a story from the bible and turn it in to a daily application in my life. Thanks for all the great memories I have of time spend building a relationship with you. I will keep a trip deposit ready. You can surprise me where God would have us go next. Thank You and God Bless You!

The Dennis Nelson Family

Pastor Joe,

During the 6 years that we have been part of this congregation we have been blessed especially through your thought-provoking sermons. May the Lord continue to bless you and keep you and may His light shine on you.

We remember the several trips we have been blessed to be a part of as the church group traveled together. Even before we became members of Atonement our first trip was the Lutherland Tour where we got to know you and other Atonemites.

Thank you for being an important part of our lives. At this ten year mark we share in your celebration from Minnesota and wish you many more years of pastoring your flock.

Shalom, Jim and Erika Peterson

Dear Pastor Joe,

Congratulations on your 10th anniversary shepherding the members at Atonement Lutheran Church.

It is with grateful and sincere appreciation for the moments of awe that I have experienced when you have shared the many different facets of scripture from the pulpit from travel experiences and Bible studies. You have been blessed with an enormous talent and I am forever thankful that God has led you to be our pastor.

Your friendship to Major was a huge gift and I sincerely believe that this gift allowed him to follow his journey to heaven knowing that he was a child of God.

Thank you for all the yesterdays, for today and especially for all the tomorrows as you continue your servant leadership at Atonement.

Gratefully, 