



May 5, 2016

Dear Crestwood Family and Friends:

In 1979 it was my extreme joy and privilege to become the Pastor of Crestwood Presbyterian Church. Never in the far reaches of my imagination did I envision being at Crestwood for 37 years. When I arrived at Crestwood, I knew it was a unique congregation of God's people. Dr. Ben Lacy Rose said to me in a very personal conversation that "*Crestwood is not an ordinary congregation of the PCUS.*" He was absolutely correct! For all these years it has been my joy to watch what God could do with a dedicated congregation which believed deeply, loved God's Word and desired to serve in costly ways to the glory of God. While there have been several opportunities to leave and serve in other congregations, it seemed God always called me to stay and staying at Crestwood never proved to be a mistake.

In 1999 it was clear to me that God was up to something that was big and bold and exciting. I searched my heart and sought to discern God's will for my life and in something of a dramatic way, God called me to walk with Crestwood into a new day by becoming a "multi-site" congregation. The land gift for the West Campus, along with the financial generosity of the congregation, combined with the hard work and dedication of the people of Crestwood proved to be confirmation of the call to do a new thing at Crestwood. Amazing things were ahead for all of us. It has not always been easy, but it has always been exciting and fulfilling.

In 2012, the decision of the Session to seek separation from the PCUSA was both daunting and humbling. The decision alone showed both the character of Crestwood and the strength of its Session. This process was endured and successful largely through the strong, faithful leadership of the Session and the prayer support and encouragement of the congregation.

For 37 years we have labored together and through all these times we have seen the hand of God at work.

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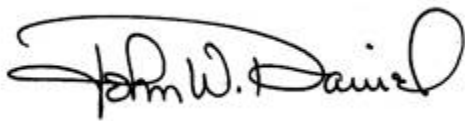
crestwoodchurch.org

For over a year Jenny and I have been thinking about when it would be the right time for me to step down as Senior Pastor of Crestwood. Separation complicated this process of planning, but it did not stop it. I have spent much time in prayer asking for God's direction and timing. At the April stated meeting, I informed the Session that it is my intent to retire as Senior Pastor at Crestwood Church on June 1, 2017. I feel that this is the right and faithful next step for my life and for Crestwood Church. I believe this transition opens a pathway to the next season of God's work through Crestwood.

Calling a new Senior Pastor is a huge task. It involves prayer and much analytical work, as well as carefully following the polity of the ECO for such matters. To assure that all details are faithfully attended to, the Session has acted to engage the Rev. John Herschman as a consultant to guide the preparation process that will pave the way for the calling of a new Senior Pastor of Crestwood. John Herschman was Senior Pastor for 28 years of the well-known and dynamic West End Assembly of God here in Richmond. John designed and led a transition process that was highly successful at West End. John will assist and facilitate the process that will lay the foundation for a Search Committee to complete its work. Having John to shepherd and facilitate this process will allow the ministry and work of Crestwood to continue to move forward even while the search process is underway.

You have so richly and deeply impacted and blessed our lives as a family and me as your Pastor. It is impossible to find the words to express what all you mean now and will forever mean to Jenny and me. I look forward to this coming year and pledge to do all I can to make for an easy and faithful transition to a new Pastor. Thank you for the blessings of all these years and your commitment to the future of Crestwood Presbyterian Church. I hope to see you this Sunday in worship as I seek to add a personal touch to this letter.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John W. Daniel". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "J" and a long, horizontal flourish extending across the rest of the name.

John W. Daniel