

Dear Friends of Lake Grove,

Scripture says, “Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever” (1 Chronicles 16:34). What wonderful words for us as my first opportunity to write to you as your Senior Pastor-Elect!

I am overwhelmingly thankful for God’s goodness and love to lead us into ministry together. This past Sunday will stand out as one of the most memorable highlights of my ministry with its meaningful services, joyful receptions, and a celebratory congregational meeting. I am grateful for the long and hard work of the Pastor Nominating Committee, the fortitude of the staff, the patience of the leadership, and most importantly your faithful prayers!

In addition to Sunday, I had the opportunity to be with the church staff on Monday. They were eager to share with me their hearts for ministry and love of Christ. I hope you all know what faithful servants they are!

I must express again why I love LGPC and why God has led my family and me to join in your ministry here:

- You are a congregation who loves Jesus Christ and seeks him in all you do.
- You are a congregation who loves scripture, transformed by the Spirit through your passion for God’s Word.
- You are a congregation who longs for the world to know the transformational power and freedom of a life with Jesus Christ.
- You are a congregation who places high importance on worship, desiring to draw others in through a rich experience of God’s presence.
- You are a congregation who faithfully prays.
- You are a congregation with a faithful and rich tradition to preserve.
- You are a congregation poised to launch new initiatives to spread the gospel.
- You are a congregation with diverse gifts and perspectives, reflecting a God’s kingdom, encouraging all people to know Christ.
- You are a congregation with thoughtful pastors, an amazing staff, committed elders and trustees, caring deacons, and an army of volunteers carrying out Christ’s mission to a world desperately needing him.
- ...and you are a congregation with so many more grace-filled attributes!

I can’t wait for you to know Paige, too! She is an amazing woman with her own sense of God’s calling on her life. She attended Princeton Theological Seminary, is an



educator with teaching credentials in several states, and is an incredible mother to our three kids. I am humbled to have her as my partner in life and ministry. You are going to love her!

I will be arriving in mid-August to move into the office and orient myself with LGPC's leadership and staff. However, my first regular Sunday in the pulpit will be our "Launch Sunday" on September 10 as we kick off a new year of ministry. Paige and I are counting the days when we can finally be with you as we roll up our sleeves doing ministry together!

Thank you for the outpouring of love and welcome and grace to Paige and me. God has made Lake Grove Presbyterian an amazing church and is doing exciting things in your midst, and we are eager to link our family to the larger Family of God at Lake Grove. Let's join in this great adventure together as we fix our eyes on Christ!

With great anticipation,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mark McIlraith", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Rev. Dr. Mark McIlraith  
Senior Pastor-Elect  
Lake Grove Presbyterian Church