

Dear friends and brothers and sisters in Christ in the Tenth community,

It is with some sadness and mixed emotions, yet also a sense of peace, that I convey the following news to you. My time at Tenth will be coming to an end on August 31st, following some holiday time in late July and August. I am very grateful for the opportunity I have had to serve in worship and arts at Tenth over the past 13 years. It has been a joy and honour to serve at Tenth with you, and to see and participate in the work of God and the growth at Tenth over the years, emerging from a single-site church into a multi-site church with multiple communities.

Recently, Pastor Ken spoke about the Earth being God's temple, and how beauty feeds our souls. Along with those two truths, I have always been inspired by the description of the inclusion of the artists and artisans in the building of the temple in the Old Testament. With this in mind, it has certainly fed my soul to worship our Master Artist by collaborating in our worship life with those among you with artistic talents: to draw in and engage musicians of many kinds, painters, poets, actors, songwriters, graphic artists, dancers, choreographers, photographers, choristers, decorators, lighting designers, videographers, sound engineers, and more, each with unique, God-given artistic gifts and styles, has been an incredible privilege.

Moreover, thanks to the talents and expertise among you, it has been a delight to be able to include at times, especially in special seasons of the year, a diversity of musical styles important in our city, culture, and world, and diverse instrumentation in our community worship life. It has been exciting to complement our predominant leaning on mainstream contemporary worship, with occasional inclusion of other musical styles, including gospel, contemporary choral, classic hymns, new hymnity, soul, folk, jazz, classical, and orchestral music, while at the same time including brand new, original arrangements from our own community, and sometimes fully original songs. To include those of you with talents to play diverse instruments, from the trumpet to the guzheng (Chinese zither), the viola to the sitar, and the guitar to the mandolin, has been enriching for us all. Thanks to the many singers among you who have sung in the choir, vocal ensemble, and children's choir; worshipping God with you has been an honour and delight. Together with all of you at Tenth, it has been a joy and privilege to help foster a global perspective in our worship life, to help draw on the best of worship music globally past and present, while also encouraging new music from within our church, all for the glory of God.

To see musical and artistic gifts in people among you find expression as acts of worship to God in our community has been beautiful, fulfilling and life-giving for me, for them, and I hope also for many more of you in our community and beyond as well. I hope and trust those of you with such gifts, as well as newcomers to the church with artistic talents, can continue to share of their gifts in worship and arts at Tenth to bless the Lord and our city. I will cherish numerous wonderful memories of serving among you. Tenth has a wonderful history of drawing in people of many kinds, including people on the fringes of faith, something I highly respect and will always be grateful for. Praising God together with all of you in song and the various service elements and events over the years has been a great joy. Thanks to all of you who have also

participated in special readings and service elements, including all the children who have contributed to special Sunday services. I am grateful to the entire Tenth community for the ways the church has blessed me through the years, and my prayers are with Tenth in a period of restructuring. I am very glad and pleased that Marissa is continuing in worship and arts at Tenth based at Mount Pleasant. It has been a delight to serve with her. She is a wonderful and talented person, full of the Spirit, with a great heart for worship and the arts, and she exudes worship of God in her ministry and person, in thought, word, and action.

I am especially grateful to Pastor Ken and our staff and many of you for the joy of working together for Advent, Christmas Concerts, Lent and Easter Services over all these years. As I embark on a new chapter in my life, along with Dorothy, Rachel, Wesley, and Jessica, I would appreciate your prayers as to what God has next in store for us. It is both exciting and a little scary to look to the future in faith, but we do so in trust. May the Lord bless you, and keep you, and may His face shine upon you always.

John

John Williams
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