

The Rev. Dr. Thomas (Tom) Hanson

a faithful pastor of this church for 50 years

Tom Hanson was born on April 25, 1944, in Minneapolis, MN. He graduated from Augsburg College, Minneapolis, MN (1966); Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN (1971) and received his Doctor of Ministry degree from McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago, IL in 1975. He then enrolled in a post-doctoral fellowship at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago from 1976-1979 and completed a Geriatric Pastoral Care Institute program at the Center for Aging, Religion & Spirituality, St. Paul, MN in 1999.

Tom married Wanda Wagner on January 29, 1966 and they became parents of two sons – Marc & Nathan. They have also been blessed with two grandchildren.

Tom was ordained on January 9, 1972, at St. John Lutheran Church, Springfield, IL and served the following congregations:

- Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, Centralia, IL (Pastor, 1972-1975)
- First Lutheran Church, Rock Island, IL (Senior Pastor, 1975-1981)
- McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago, IL (Adjunct faculty, 1976-1980)
- First Lutheran Church, DeKalb, IL (Senior Pastor, 1981-2001).

Pastor Hanson retired on January 1, 2001. In his free time, he enjoys hiking, bicycling, and reading. Pastor Hanson and his wife Wanda are members of First Lutheran Church, Moline. However, they currently live in Urbandale, IA, and worship mostly at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Des Moines, IA.

As Pastor Hanson reflects on his ministry, he shares with us a lesson 50 years in the learning ...

“It was a few days following my installation as pastor of my first congregation. The local ministerial alliance met to welcome me to the community. As the meeting concluded, the elderly, long serving pastor of the downtown Methodist congregation approached me. Undoubtedly, he noticed the “deer in the headlights” look in my eyes. He said, “Being a parish pastor is not that complicated. It requires only two things. Proclaim the Gospel and love your people. Do those things and the rest will take care of itself.”

A half century has passed. I have long ago forgotten the man’s name. I have never forgotten his sage advice. I share his insightful words with the leaders of today’s church in the hope his wisdom will serve as a focus for you as well.

Thanks be to God for the privilege of serving God’s people.”

