

I HAVE TWO WORDS FOR YOU

(Hint: they aren't "Happy Birthday!")

By Ken Kieffer

Kind of like going to the dentist, I've been dreading this day for some time now.

As an introverted Norwegian, here's how I'd like this all to play out: at 11:59 p.m. on June 30, 2017, I hand the keys to the district over to the Rev. Dr. Alpher Sylvester, wish him well, and then ride off into the sunset (I know what you're thinking, but there ARE parts of Norway this time of year where the sun is actually setting at midnight).

But it's not that simple, is it? Nothing these days is.

First of all, there's more than one key to hand over. Secondly, there are passwords and PINs and double-secret codes and handshakes that Alpher needs to know ahead of time in order for this transition to be smooth and complete. And lastly, you and I have been in ministry together for quite a while now, complete with celebrations and tribulations, and I'm guessing it would be wrong to not observe/recognize that fact in some adult fashion.

To be totally transparent, that's one of the reasons why I went out of my way this past Lent and drove up to your church and prayed for it - to say "goodbye" **without** having to hug anyone, or dab my eyes or deal with the lump in my throat. Just pray and run, and no one gets hurt (or even sentimental!).

But not everyone is an introverted Norwegian. So maybe you're expecting a more mature and responsible response out of your DS after 8 years together. After all, breaking up by text or post-it note is no way to end a significant relationship. Right?

So here goes...I really appreciate that you have been an integral part of this. You've prayed for me. You've supported me. You've challenged me. You've stood up to me.

Without you, we'd be just another district. But because of you, and your faith and wisdom and passion and call, we've been able to be the living and breathing body of Christ that I like to call "Team Connecticut".

THANK YOU! (Hint: *those* are the two words)