

It's that time again when we look back on the year with its changes and try to peer into the coming one with its changes. Fortunately at this time of year we are also celebrating the coming of God the Son into our world. So any changes we meet we need not face alone!



Karen & I find much joy in the look back on our year. Our kids and grandkids continue to thrive, and continue to enjoy spending time together, helped by the marvel of us living no more than 15-20 mins from each other. Sharing Sunday noon meals are the pattern, often with all of us, followed by afternoons of conversation and table games, including a game Briana created where you fill a plot of land with native trees and flowers to help your pollinators gain lots of points

for you. The 6 grandkids are now age 2 to 8.

Three major changes are seen as we look ahead to the next year: *Retirement.* Sunday Dec 29, 2024 will be my last Sunday as lead pastor at Trissels — I've told them I want my role to change when I turn 70 (which will be less than a week after that Sunday). My sermons next year will be those simple truths in love and wonder that I find so important I would want them in any book I write!



A move. This will be our last year in the parsonage next to the church. Darrel & Briana have a house being built toward the edge of Broadway — Google shows it being constructed if you search "658 Jade Ct, Broadway, VA." It includes a nice apartment for Karen & I. Currently the outer shell is done and



electrical wiring and plumbing are going in. Darrel & family hope to move in next summer; Karen & I will wait until the end of the year.

Another move. Congregations including Trissels are leaving our conference and denomination. Since 1999 I've worried that this day might come and have patiently and peaceably poured phenomenal



hours into trying to have it not happen on my watch. To no avail. If you want a window into my heart on it, here's a link to what I said the other week to local Mennonite pastor-friends: bit.ly/trisvmc.



Karen loves her grand-parenting role, babysitting several days a week. And they all deeply love her! Tomorrow Rachel and the grandkids (April & Scott's Miles and Oscar, Darrel & Briana's Lewis, Ian, and Corinne — but not Daniel & Meg's two-year-old Sylvia) will come for a meal, an evening of crafts and cookie decorating, and then a night "sleeping" under the Christmas tree with Nana. Rachel and Papa (the grandkids' name for me) choose not to join that nocturnal challenge!

Bless you, *Harold & Karen*