

June 2018 Article: "Repositioning"

About a dozen years ago, Rev. Art Dueker retired, at age seventy-two, from serving as pastor of Hope Lutheran Church in Rochester, New York. He had served there for forty-four years and had confirmed both Sabra and me. He was also the pastor who ordained me in 1990.

But when the time for his retirement came, Pastor Dueker didn't speak of himself as retiring. He spoke of the Lord "repositioning" him into other areas of service. He would go on, over the last decade of his life, to serve congregations as both a guest preacher and as a vacancy pastor. Then, at his passing, Pastor Dueker's obituary read that he, "met his resurrected Savior and King face to face on January 29, 2017."

The summer months for many congregations are usually a time where they take a break from various programs and Bible Studies that often run from early September to about mid-June. Folks go on vacation--often for several weeks at a time. During the "hazy, crazy, lazy days of summer" our life together at our churches switches gears. St. John and Zion certainly fit this pattern.

During the slower summer months, it's all too tempting to "retire" from our congregation's worship and life for weeks at a time. But Hebrews 10:24-25 tells us, "Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day (of the Lord's coming) drawing near." Perhaps this neglect had to do with their own "summer slump" that they faced during the warmer months in the Eastern Mediterranean world.

So too, especially during the summer, we are not meant to "retire" from church. You might say that summer is meant to be a time of "repositioning" as we live out our relationship with the Lord. Our vacation times are meant to have an element of retreat and reflection to them. They are meant to be times where we find a special rest in Christ (Hebrews 4:9). Then, as you travel, I would encourage you to look up one of sister congregations of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod for Sunday worship. You can do this at [LCMS.org/locators/find a church](http://LCMS.org/locators/find_a_church) and I certainly welcome you to ask me to assist you in doing this.

May this coming summer be time of fruitful repositioning for you through the Lord who repositioned Himself from heaven to earth in order to save us from sin and death (Philippians 2:6-8). Have a happy and blessed summer!

Your Brother in Christ, Pastor Bill