

Column030523

**Companions on the Journey**

**March 5, 2023**

Dear Friends,

Back in the fall of the year, Pastor Charles Quann from Bethlehem Baptist Church, a longtime friend extended to me an invitation to preach at Bethlehem one more time before I transition from the active pastoral ministry to a less active ministry. We went back and forth until we were able to settle on Sunday February 26<sup>th</sup>. That Sunday, on the calendar of Bethlehem Baptist, was designated as Clergy Appreciation Sunday. Pastor Quann wanted me to be with them and bring the Lord's word to his people. I put the date on my calendar and went on about my normal business

Last week he called me and asked me for the Scripture passage I was choosing for my sermon. I told him it was Luke 22: 39 and following. I knew that I was going to be tight timewise. His service was scheduled for 9AM and I was scheduled for the 10:30 Eucharistic celebration here. My thinking was that I could be finished by 10:20, jump in the car and be back at Saint Anthony's just in time to begin the 10:30 on time. Wrong. I was eight minutes late. I apologized to those in attendance. I really do strive to begin our celebrations on time. I did not do so last Sunday. That is on me.

Part of the reason for the delay was that Pastor Quann and his Church chose to present me with a plaque and honor me on Clergy Appreciation Sunday. I did not see that coming. The plaque reads as follows:

Presented to  
Monsignor Stephen P McHenry  
Pastor  
Saint Anthony of Padua parish  
As a faithful servant to our community,  
And a Member of the Wissahickon Faith Community,  
He leaves a rich legacy to people of all walks of life.  
Humbly submitted on this twenty-sixth day of February, 2023  
The Officers and Members of the Bethlehem Baptist Church  
Rev. Charles W. Quann, Pastor

"I thank Christ Jesus Our Lord, who has given me strength  
That He considered me trustworthy, appointing me to his service.

(1 Timothy 1: 12)

I was surprised and honored to receive their gratitude for my pastoral ministry within this local community. Our friendship goes back 32 years. I am grateful to call Charles my friend.

Peace,  
Msgr. McHenry