Good morning!

I’d like to read two lines from this copy of our session minutes. *“Larry Myland has been suggested as the new organist. He will play at worship service June 13 and 17”.* So, from June 13, 1976, to today, June 13, 2021, exactly 45 years have passed, that Larry has been sharing his phenomenal ability to play the organ for us.

Most of you know that my personal relationship with Larry is best friend/worst enemy, because you know, he can drive you nuts sometimes! I mean, I don’t throw pencil darts at anyone else in the office. BUT, he is a true-blue friend, ready to listen, ready to help, ready to support – anyone! He’s completely loyal to a fault – like only missing, I think, three Christmas Eve services in those 45 years. His dedication is unwavering, and not just Sunday mornings, but for weddings, funerals, any special programs, doing all the above to assist other churches, and of course Village Green Arts. Larry is one of the smartest and well-read people I know. And we’ve ALL learned from him!

An example? Sacred Music! Yes, sometimes I’ve called him a “stiff” with some of his musical choices for worship, but when you think about it, where better than this sanctuary to play true sacred music that’s directed to the Lord – and we get to hear it too! And, Larry’s been pretty good about integrating more familiar “old chestnuts” as he and Evor used to call them, into his music selections.

There have been so many memories with Larry – like making hospital visits together, funeral visits together, staff Epiphany parties where the Myland’s and the Pixley’s would always arrive early for a drink and pick our seats first before everybody else got there. But I’ll just briefly share two.

My first introduction to Larry was not in person, but via fax. He was still working at Humphrey Products, and would fax his music selections for the bulletin. The very first time, he sent me his music, and on the bottom of the page were very explicit instructions that I was not to EVER change the spelling of anything he handed in. EVER. (do you remember that Larry?) Not long after that I discovered two things. 1 - Larry really wasn’t what that fax made him sound like, and 2 - just a few times over the years, I’ve been able to have a little fun with his rule when he misspelled words!

The other story is from about 15 years ago. Our staff (of four at that time) had gone through some evaluations by Presbytery. It was kinda goofy and kinda a waste of time, but hey, it was something different! One of the little interesting results that came out of it were the “parts” we played at the church. For example, the pastor was the father image, the church secretary was the mother image, and the associate pastor was the cool aunt. Larry had missed that particular day and wasn’t given a “part”. So, we decided (and this is SO not politically correct, but was given to him affectionately), that his part was……… the crazy uncle that no one talks about.

Larry, this speech is silly and short and does not begin to cover your history, our history with you, or your immense contribution to this place of worship, but we’d be here all day. I love you and value our wackadoodle relationship. Day-to-day life with you has been, and remains, a joy…for the most part. You are a great musician; you’ve composed music pieces; Noël Goemanne wrote something just for you; you’re a talent on that instrument; you know so much about church stuff; you love what you do, and you are a complete friend to anyone. Tons of people admire, respect, count on, and love you. On behalf of the session, through the Worship and Music committee, thank you Larry, for being ours!

If we can talk Larry into skipping his well-rehearsed Postlude just this once, we can all head outside where a cake and card party awaits!