

A Prayer in honor of Paul at the Fifty Year Mark of His Ordination ... and Counting

Walter Brueggemann

You are the God—Father, Son, and Spirit—who calls us:

you summon us to trust in you alone;
you invite us away from our too many idols;
you beckon us beyond ourselves into your great mercy.

You are the God who empowers us:

you authorize us to live bold lives of fidelity;
you charge us to be agents of your love and justice;
you certify us to live in your image, to be generous in self-giving.

You are the God who provides for us:

you open your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing;
you equip us with abundant bread for a life of trust and obedience;
you surround us with our rich blessings of goodness and joy.

You are the God who sends us:

you dispatch us to practice hospitality in a world of hostility;
you speed us to perform forgiveness in a world of score-keeping retaliation;
you embolden us to act in generosity in a world of fearful parsimony.

We bless you that you called Paul into your good company;

We thank you that you have empowered Paul for a life of faithful ministry;

We praise you that you have provided Paul with all he needs for his life and work;

We rejoice that you have sent Paul into the world as a faithful pastor.

We pray that you will bless Paul for the next season of his life,
that he may know the joy and wellbeing of a life well lived,
and a ministry faithfully enacted.

We entrust him to you for safekeeping in full confidence of your goodness toward him.

We pray according to the faithful truth of your good news. Amen.

Walter Brueggemann: *“Paul Crittendon is a pastor in the United Church of Canada. He is the father of Jeff Crittendon, my friend, also a pastor in the UCC. I wrote the prayer to celebrate and give thanks on Paul’s anniversary of ordination for his long and faithful service to the church. Paul is among the countless pastors who do the good, demanding work of ministry in response to God’s call.”*