



Northwest FOCUS

God at Work Through Northwest Independent Church Extension

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Retreaded Ministry!

Have you heard the joke, "I didn't retire, I just got re-treaded!"? For many people called to ministry, this is true. Ministry doesn't cease at a certain age, it simply adjusts and moves on. A number of "retired" NICE missionaries bear testimony to this fact.

When **Dan and Donna Bong** retired, Dan began ministering once a month at a local retirement center. Covid brought a temporary halt, but meetings have now resumed.

David and Nancy Martin were also affected by both retirement and Covid. Nancy commented, "It's interesting that in retirement we ended up back at our first pastorate at Rock Island, WA." David led worship, occasionally preached, and mentored a couple for ministry. David admitted that the adjustment to "retirement" was difficult. He said, "I missed the blessing of preparing messages each week and leading the Body of Christ. Instead of ministering to the 200 plus folks at Manzanita, OR, I now minister to the family and those whom the Lord brings into my life. God is never finished with His work through us, but it changes. It helps to look ahead and not back, missing the good old days."

NICE Missionaries, **Jerry and Laura Conklin** moved to retirement when Laura's cancer became debilitating. Jerry confessed, "My retirement was a discouraging and difficult time for me. I was literally crying out to God in prayer for help!" And the Lord abundantly answered. Jerry is now part time hospice chaplain for the Morrow County Health District; he leads a GriefShare support group for those who have lost a loved one; he writes a daily devotional blog; and is available to fill the pulpit for several NICE pastors.



In retirement, **David West** continues to be involved in Bible Studies, and is available to preach at Carson Bible Church, as well as "taking up the slack in whatever way Pastor Thayer needs."



Larry and Linda Ott first joined the NICE Family in 1984, and served in three pastorates, and as NICE Assistant Director and part-time secretary in the NICE Office. Upon "retirement" in 2008, they moved closer to Linda's family where Larry began a Prison Ministry, and taught weekly Bible studies in nursing homes. After Larry was called to glory, Linda began to ministering to the widows of NICE, regularly contacting these ladies with notes of encouragement and support.



When they reached "retirement age", **Bill and Sharilyn Peters** assumed their life would slow down. Instead the Lord retreaded and redirected! Bill is filling the pulpit once a month in two different churches, and is providing counsel to the Elder Board at the church which he pastored for 30 years.



"Retreaded Ministry" continues for NICE's former Directors, as well. The **Brubaker's** "retirement" allowed Earl and Shirley to be available for interim ministry at 5 different churches, for a year or more sometimes, as well as filling the pulpit for 1 to 3 months for pastors in times of bereavement or illness. **Roy Sprague** reflected, "These years of retreading have been like the frosting on the cake for us - so rich and fulfilling, as we've been able to minister in numerous churches each year!" Currently, the Spragues are serving as Interim Pastor at a church in Washington, as well as teaching a weekly Bible Study in a Senior Community. Roy said, "Because of our 'season of life' things do change but we can still serve the Lord!"



Top to bottom: Bong, Martin, Conklin, West, Ott, Peters, Brubaker, Sprague

Ministry adjusts and moves on for NICE missionaries! Thank you for supporting these individuals financially and in prayer!

So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase. I Corinthians 3:7