***“Yes!”***

Whatever God has promised gets stamped with the *Yes* of Jesus.

In him, this is what we preach and pray, the great Amen, God’s *Yes* and our *Yes* together, gloriously evident.

God affirms us, making us a sure thing in Christ, putting his *Yes* within us.

By his Spirit he has stamped us with his eternal pledge ‒ a sure beginning of what God is destined to complete.

**2 Corinthians 1: 22-23**

Sometimes it’s difficult to ascertain the *“yes”* of God. Sometimes it isn’t. Mary, an unwed teenager heard God’s *“yes”* and recognized it immediately. Joseph, her fiancé, heard her *“yes”* and didn’t believe it. But because Mary was so certain of what she had heard, she did not hesitate to move forward, even if it meant being all alone. But she would not be alone. She would be journeying with God. Because of her faith, God spoke clearly to her fiancé, and thus he finally heard God’s *“yes”* too. And since they both clearly heard and responded, God sent them on the greatest journey of all time – together.

Over the past several months, I have heard God’s *“yes”* in my own life. It’s a clear and joyful *“yes!”* for me, for God now calls me to serve another Presbyterian church. You and I have done wonderful things together, as we served alongside each other. When I arrived here, there was grief and there was fear. You had been damaged by one of God’s representatives. I could not change your experiences, but I could try to change your future in God’s service.

Together, we studied and learned more than we could even articulate before. We struggled with life, with marriage, with children, jobs, money, neighbors and leadership. But we struggled together, as the *People of God.* Nowwe wake each morning because God has work that we are called to complete. We laugh and we lean on each other.

It’s a relationship. That’s what makes Christianity different from all other world religions. Other religions have rules and expectations. They have learning points and measuring points. But Christianity is a relationship. And I have learned that my relationship with my Lord and my God is more important than any other relationship I have or ever will have. I have learned that it is hard, and it is glorious! I have come to understand more and more about God and about my connection to God. I have learned that not every Christian is perfect. And not every Presbyterian agrees with me. I have learned that God’s ways are higher than my ways. I have learned that there truly is a God. And it’s not me.

My journey has covered many losses, many questions, many hurts, many tests, and many experiences. You have become part of my life – at celebrations and at times of profound loss. I have been humbled to find out that I know so little, and yet many of you followed my leadership. I have been used in ways I never anticipated.

 On January 16th I will move on with God to a church in northern Alabama, where I will lead again. And God will stay here with all of you. God knows your faithfulness. God knows your willingness. God knows your hearts. And God always smiles on the Presbyterian Church of Henderson. Whatever God has promised gets stamped with the “*Yes”* of Jesus. This is what we preach and pray, the great Amen, God’s “*Yes”* and our “*Yes”* together, gloriously evident.

I will always look forward to news of you, and how you continue in God’s *“YES!”*

Lord, make our lives a living *“yes!”*

**Candice**