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To Members and Friends
Bethel Evangelical Church

Thank you for the lovely send-off you gave us last Sunday. It was a truly memorable occasion and we were greatly encouraged by all the kind things that were said and written. Thank you, too, for the lovely flowers and the generous cheque. The messages on the DVD and from the "hands on" tree (see above) were very touching. There seemed to be a lot about Sainsbury's carrier bags (I can't imagine why) and my sense of humour. I couldn't help smiling at this message which said, "Thanks for making our church grate". Well, I hope I didn't "grate" on you too much!

Our first contact with Bethel was back in the Spring of 1983. We had moved from Birmingham to Coventry to be nearer my job with Massey-Ferguson and had not even made the move when I found out that I would be moving yet again to the London area in August of that year to take up a lecturing job at London Bible College.

Our guidance seemed to be somewhat illogical. Why such a short stay in Coventry? But it brought us into contact with Bethel. For 14 years I was a visiting preacher during the pastorates of John Grindell and Peter Phipps. Finally I was called to be the Pastor in 1997 and so our association with the church has actually covered around 25 years.

Over that time we have known some real characters, many of whom have gone to glory. I think of Doris Taylor, Charlie and Ollie Simpson, Pat Brown, Peter Ash and Gwen Allen, to name but a few. Being Pastor of a church brings you into contact with people at key times in their lives, times of great happiness and times of great sorrow. It has been a privilege to minister in the name of Jesus, particularly at times like these.

I have never doubted that it was the Lord's will for us to be here for the past 11 years and, although once again it seems like strange guidance, I have a real conviction that it's now time to hand over to someone else. I want to echo Paul's words in Rom. 15:17, 18. 'I glory in Christ Jesus in my service to God. I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me.'

May the Lord bless you and keep you, make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you. May he lift up the light of his countenance upon you and give you peace.

Yours in Christ

Ian and Pamela Macnair