

# A LETTER FROM DR. SEAN LUCAS

May 30, 2019

My dear Friends:

This is the last letter you will receive from me for a few weeks. You may remember that as part of my call to serve as pastor here at IPC, I get a writing “sabbatical” every other year (actually, it works out that they fall in the odd years). So, this is the year for that. I’ll be with you Sunday, June 2, and then will be out of the pulpit until July 28; the other ministers will continue in our series on the Psalms of Ascent, and I’ll finish the series when I return.

I have the word “sabbatical” in quotes because it isn’t really a rest, per se; but this time is a break from writing sermons, meeting with staff and committees, and carrying out my other pastoral work to focus especially on writing. I have one item that is already contracted, an essay on confessional revision among mainline Presbyterians at the end of the nineteenth century focused on the doctrine of election. And there are a few other things that I’d like to knock out: a review essay focused on the author Marilynne Robinson and two book proposals, one for an expositional commentary on Mark and the other the series of messages I did on sonship. Book proposals require two finished chapters with an introduction, so that’s a good bit of work.

I take the writing part of this time seriously. As far as I am concerned, you are paying me to write. And so, God helping me, I’ll be writing as fast and as hard as I can during this time. Of course, it is not all that I’m doing: I’m scheduled to teach at RTS Atlanta the week of June 17; the following week is General Assembly in Dallas; and the two weeks after that will be vacation time. But I have found that this different rhythm, though it is work, gets me back to congregational ministry feeling energized and refreshed. It has been since 2015 that I have had a writing sabbatical; all the writing that I’ve done since then has been carved out of other time. So, being able to do this over the summer is a true gift for which I am grateful to you all.

Of course, you will be in good hands: not only with our ministers and ministry staff, but also with those who are coming to serve with us here at IPC. On June 1, Maryanna Story will be joining our student ministry team as assistant director of student ministry. Maryanna is a graduate of Ole Miss and is finishing up the fellows program at Briarwood Presbyterian Church, Birmingham, Alabama. We are thrilled to have her serving with Brad, Stephen, and Mary V, as they minister to our students. The following month, on July 1, Taylor Peaster will be coming on board to serve as assistant director of women’s ministry. For the past two years, Taylor has served at the University of Memphis with RUF; we are so grateful that she will be working with Lisa Turner to connect with our 18- to 30-year-old women and to point them to Jesus. Many of you know Taylor and her husband, Matt; please do welcome Taylor to our team over the summer.

And you will see the Lucases around. I’ve never been able to worship at other churches when I’m in town. This is our church and you are our people. And so, the Sundays we are in Memphis, we’ll be at IPC, sitting under the faithful ministry of the Word and enjoying the praises of God with you, his people. Before you know it, we’ll be gearing up for the fall—but let’s enjoy the summer first, shall we?

In the grip of God’s grace,



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