

## *Pastor Appreciation*

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Pastor John Hicks  
First United Methodist Church

Question: What do Smokey the Bear, Winnie the Pooh and John the Baptist have in common?

Answer: The same middle name.

Why is the obvious so oblivious, so hard for us to see?

The month of October is "Pastor Appreciation Month," a month in which we're all encouraged to "do something special" for our Pastors.

Pastors have a special and unique calling. Pastors are not only called put in a lot of hard hours preparing sermons and teachings, but they are called to nurture us, care for us, pray for us, and stand beside us through good times and bad. It's a rewarding call, but it's not an easy one.

Now, I know your church is different, but you'd be surprised how many pastors are discouraged, overworked, overstressed, and under-supported.

So, how should we honor our pastors during Pastor Appreciation Month? Well, to start with, honor them during the other 11 months of the year, as well. Why limit our encouraging words toward our Pastor to the month of October?

Right now, however, would be a great time to do some random and spontaneous act of act of encouragement and love for your Pastor - because you want to, not just because it's "Pastor Appreciation Month."

Make a point to do something special to encourage your pastor. The gift isn't the important point. You'd be surprised how much just a little note of encouragement can do. Let them know that you're on their side, that you're supporting them with prayer on a regular basis, and that you love them. They need to hear it.

I can tell you from the perspective of a pastor, every token of thanks is appreciated.

And by the way, for those of us with multiple-staff churches, the same goes for every single staff member. They all experience the same sort of pressures.

Don't forget your pastor's wife, the most important human being in your Pastor's life. She's the one that props him up when he doesn't think he can go on, the one whom he can confide in. She sees him at his worst—and at his best—and often makes the difference between success and failure.

Let me close with one additional thing you can do for pastor appreciation that will bless your pastor not just this month, but through the months and years ahead.

Pray. The lifeblood of the Church is solid Biblical teaching and prayer. One of the best things you can do to assist your pastor is to pray for your Church family, for your community, for your church leadership, and for your pastor and his family. Pray that the spiritual eyes and ears of those who hear the Word will be open to the message of God's love and forgiveness.

The importance and power of prayer cannot be underestimated. Prayer will change you, your family, your church, and your community. There's no greater display of appreciation you can show.