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**Sermon – Thanks To YOU, The congregation**

**Scripture – 1 Phillipians 1:1-11**

**Main Message – My annual thanks to everyone who has done the will of God and has supported my wife and I for the last 10 years.**

Today I want to do something that has become a bit of a tradition for me. Annually, on the anniversary of another year of my continued service to this church I want to say thank you. No job of any kind is always easy, but you have made it as easy as one could/ You have accepted us for 10 years now as the minister of the word here in this esteemed church. It is always the congregation that keeps a church alive and not the Pastor. My experience is that a Pastor has only the unique ability to tear a church apart, but not to keep in functioning properly. That is the fullness of the body of Christ, which even while not perfect, the job still gets done. If I left tomorrow, this church would still go on because it is God's will that it goes on, not my will.

Let me read to you something for me to build upon from 1 Phil 1.

My first thank you is that you have looked past my weaknesses and missteps and persevered anyway. Perhaps you should express to me those things you see that I can improve upon. Then next year I can thank you for that as well.

I give thanks that this small church supports those in need often both here locally and in the mission field. That is the heart of a church. I doubt the community at large realizes the things we do that never get stated. We've given money so an out of state woman could get her car repaired.

Our food pantry is an obvious place of the kind of care that we show the community. I'm so glad we do it and I pray we continue.

As I look about the congregation and see so many that step up into roles without a lot of bellyaching. You do this because it is your heart and the heart of those who know that God spurs us on to greater things.

Continuing along with the spirit of praise, here is some things I see just looking around.

As I thank you, I do not wish your reward to be here, but in the future when we are in God's perfect abode designed for us. I see no one that wants notoriety for the here and now, but I see those who are in love with being a servant.

Thanks so much.