

*After 17 years of extraordinary music ministry, the time has come to say farewell to the Western States Servant Band. We give thanks to God for this truly extraordinary journey – and pray for God's guidance as we move on to something new and different. Who knows what that will look like – we'll simply watch for open doors, and see what happens when we walk through them.*

*In reflecting on 17 years of existence, I am reminded what a great run it has been: Over the years the servant band has appeared in 54 different American cities (19 in Washington, 14 in California, 7 in Montana, 2 in Idaho, 2 in Oregon, and one each in Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, Georgia, Iowa, Louisiana, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio and Oklahoma). We have led music at Western States Youth Gatherings in 1993, 1996, 1999, 2002, 2005 and 2008. We have appeared at national ELCA youth gatherings in 1994, 1997 and 2000. One of our greatest challenges was the 6,600 mile Sojourn 2000 bus tour. And we have led music at countless other synod gatherings, tour stops, school assemblies and church concerts over the years. We have recorded five CD's (with a sixth CD about two-thirds done). And we have included nearly 60 band members over the years, while auditioning over a thousand others. We even performed with John Ylvisaker, appeared on radio, television and internet – and received numerous invitations overseas! What an amazing legacy!*

*Thanks be to God for the energy, gifts and commitment of the 58 young people who have been part of this group over the years -- and for the congregations, pastors, youth leaders and parents who have supported and encouraged them along the way. In the coming weeks, this website will be dedicated to those young people, and will offer a historical perspective on what they've accomplished, complete with interesting photos! In the early fall, this website will be terminated. Until then, check back and see what unfolds here over the next several weeks!*

*Toward the end of the summer there will be a “farewell event” at which time band members past and present will be invited to gather for food, conversation and music. We'll show a historical video tribute to the band, and dig out all the WSSB charts as we just have fun playing and singing together. Details about this event are presently being formulated – they will be published here when they are finalized.*

*Thank you to ALL of our supporters for your encouragement and help over the years. Without you these last 17 years of WSSB would not have happened.*

*Pastor Steve Olson*