

I felt like I knew Steve long before I actually met him. We were new at Alpine and at that time, he and the pastor were the only people that really spoke from the stage every week. From the stage, Steve made us feel welcome, made us feel comfortable and made us feel at home. I don't know about the other 1,000 people that attended Alpine at that point, but to me he was a friend long before we ever spoke.

After a year, I joined the music team and worked under Steve every other week for the next several years. In that position I was able to see first hand how creative he was in putting together programs, how thoughtful he was in communicating a message and how effectively he could lead the entire music and drama teams to deliver his ideas on a weekly basis. Every week it was something different and I was always impressed that he could conceive of all the new ideas and then lead in the production of them in a high quality manner.

I appreciated the fact that Steve held high standards. Starting with auditions to be on the music team, he expected both the musicians and the vocalists to bring their "A" game. The best part of that is that good musicians like to play with good musicians and by holding high standards he was able to attract and retain top talent on the team for several years.

Finally, I've always appreciated Steve's heart. I asked him several years ago what he would do if he ever left Alpine and he said that he would be excited to do a lot of different things, but that he had to make a difference. I think he already has.

-John Syverson