

To say that these are challenging times may seem like an understatement right now.

Quite a few of us in the LPPC family have lived in New Mexico for decades, and we've never seen a heat wave like what we're living through right now. I can't remember a time when we had more than a week of 100-plus degree days. We continue to face rising prices for food and utilities. Many of us are finding that, with bodies that have become high mileage vehicles, we've got more physical challenges. These health issues can be tough, and we have lost a number of our loved ones.

The last few years have represented such unusual times, with many stressors. We haven't lived through times like these except about 100 years ago, with the Spanish Flu Epidemic and the Great Depression. I don't remember it, but I do have family pictures. There's so much in our world that is in flux. That's stressful.

When I feel down or troubled, what helps me is to not only remember the lyrics from the James Taylor song. But to take time to stop, pray and reflect (when I remember to slow down and do that). There are so many references to Living in the Spirit in the New Testament. We can reach that powerful touchstone, which gives us peace, support, and an ability to experience hope and joy no matter what. Some of our greatest spiritual teachers have gone through the wringer, and yet have had hope and joy in their lives. How? Living in the Spirit provides an anchor and a way through which allows us to live in the slipstream that carries us.

Living in the Spirit also allows us to connect with each other and support each other. When we reach out to one another, that is life giving. I see that all around me at LPPC. So many people are helping one another and reaching out to help others. This church is a wonderfully compassionate and connectional family, Living in the Spirit.

This Sunday, I'll be leading worship, and will be preaching on Living in the Spirit. I look forward to sharing with you. Our scripture readings will be Genesis 25: 19-24 and Romans 8: 1-11.

Dios te Bendiga and may you feel God's Spirit always.

Anne