

President's Note for September 2020

"Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where nature may heal and give strength to body and soul." John Muir

As I write this note there are quite literally hundreds of fires burning here on the west coast. It has been a troubling time and a troubling year that began rather uneventfully but that has brought with it pandemic, economic and social upheaval, political discord, record breaking oppressive heat, simultaneous twin tropical storms and now fire. Yet, we know God is still in charge and our Lord will watch over us always, particularly in troubling times. Eventually, as a people, we'll make it through this adversity and ultimately emerge, not unscathed or unchanged, but, I pray, strengthened and renewed, though sadly not all of us. The world and our maker work in mysterious ways, but we know from scripture and our own lives that God can bring good out of trying circumstances. John Muir saw our Creator in nature and we know that following the devastating fires in Yellowstone of a few years ago the park has emerged healthier and more beautiful than ever. I hope and pray for that same kind of renewal here, both in the world of nature and in our own spiritual nature. To echo Muir, may the healing powers of God and nature heal and strengthen our bodies and souls. Cesar Chavez says it this way, "You are never strong enough that you don't need help." As independent as we may try to be we will always need help, God's and each others.

We continue with our Sunday morning YouTube Channel virtual worship. If you haven't been participating, make an effort to watch and encourage others to watch (and pray and sing along). While we understand it is not the same as being together physically, it is a way to worship together spiritually. We apologize for the technical glitch on August 23rd where the wrong service played. We'll work to see that glitch doesn't happen again. After the service premieres you can watch any video at any time. For those who haven't heard the news from our church synod, the synod convention has been postponed until 2021 and as a consequence of that postponement the election of a new bishop will also take place in 2021 at that convention.

We are saddened to report the passing of our good friend and sister in Christ Ann Stork. At her request there are no services planned. Our condolences to Ann's family. Ann loved her church and church family and particularly enjoyed our social functions, like our Oktoberfest. As some of you may know Ann's son Mark and family are members at our friends and tenants Grace Presbyterian. When Ann heard they were looking for a new home for worship several years ago she told her family about our social hall. The rest is history, a Godsend and a blessing for both congregations.

We give thanks to our readers, Pastor Townsend and Jerry Perry for making it possible for us to continue with worship, albeit in a new way. We pray, with God's guidance, scientists and epidemiologists will soon find a way to control and treat if not completely eliminate the Corona virus. As we've indicated before, current guidelines recommend not returning to gathering physically at least through September. Being a congregation with a number of older members with underlying health conditions we believe it is wise to continue to follow these guidelines.

Thanks to all who continue to send in their offerings and help us to continue to serve our Lord as best we are able during trying times. As the saying goes, this too shall pass. Pray for one another, our nation and our church as we try to discern how best to move forward. On behalf of our pastors and church council, may God continue to watch over our glorious natural world that He created and also watch over all of us, the body of Christ, in the days and weeks ahead as we offer our thanks and prayers for his mercy, grace and watchfulness.

"God writes the Gospel not in the Bible alone, but also on trees, and in the flowers and clouds and stars." Martin Luther

Blessings,

Chuck Prewett

Council President