

Pastor Letter 4/21/21

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Sometimes, if I stand up too fast, I find myself momentarily disoriented. Many things can cause temporary disorientation. Sometimes struggles and conflicts can leave us feeling disoriented. Author A.J. Swaboda writes that "Orientation is a fascinating word based on the Latin word *oriri*, meaning "to rise," as in where the sun rises. The sun rises in the east. Early Christians gave great thought and intentionality to what they oriented themselves. For instance, the altar in the earliest churches was intentionally directed east so that worshipers would face Jerusalem as they received the Lord's Supper together. For this same reason, many of the earliest Christians were buried with their feet facing toward the east. Their rationale was simple: when Christ returned and resurrected their bodies, they wanted to be standing and be facing Jerusalem in their resurrection. This is a reminder to us that, when we feel disoriented, we can reorient ourselves by turning toward Christ. To be a disciple then was, and is, to reorient one's entire life and death around Jesus Christ.

One way we can reorient ourselves is through spiritual practices and worship. This Sunday we have the opportunity to worship both in-person and remotely. We continue with the second part of our phased opening of worship services. This means a few more people are allowed in the sanctuary. The leadership and I recognize that, as more become vaccinated, more are returning to worship. However, to continue worshipping safely, I would remind us to wait to be dismissed by the usher and exit as quickly as possible, to ensure it does not prohibit the required social distancing. If you would like to talk and fellowship together, we ask that you do that outside. Let us come together this Sunday to reorient ourselves and as we hear about our call to be light.

In His Peace,

Pastor Nicki

*If you are worshipping from home, I would encourage you to use the YouTube platform for optimal streaming quality. Additionally, feel free to sign on early no need to wait right until 10am anymore. *

YouTube: live stream and recording can be found at <https://www.espresbyterian.com/worship/> or <https://www.youtube.com/user/ESPresbyterian>

Facebook: click on the link below near the time the service begins at 10:00am to watch the live stream <https://www.facebook.com/espresbyterian/>

Additionally, bulletins and an online hymnal have been put on the website and can be found at <https://www.espresbyterian.com/worship/sunday-bulletin/>

Ways to give- mail or drop of check/cash through no contact mail slot in office window. Drop off envelope in offering plates before or after worship services. Donate on our website by going to the home page at <https://www.espresbyterian.com/> and clicking on the Donate button in the upper right corner. Designate where you would like the money to go by using the note section.