

Pastor Letter 6/2/21

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I was filling out a survey for my son and it asked about his pain tolerance. Pain is an interesting thing. It can be physical, mental or spiritual. Typically, people try to avoid pain or resolve it, but sometimes we don't even notice it. Especially, if it is mental or spiritual, it is easy to unconsciously push it deep inside us to where we think it doesn't exist. This focus on pain had me thinking about a recent blog by Richard Rohr, a popular Franciscan Friar, author and spiritual writer, who was discussing what we are to do with pain, who wrote, "If we do not transform our pain, we will most assuredly transmit it". If we fail to address pain, it comes out in many forms such as anger, violence and hatred. This can be taken out on innocent people who did not cause the pain, simply because we didn't transform our pain. When we find ourselves angry or acting in ways that aren't in line with God's, try to find where the pain is and let God transform it, for when we care for our pain, those around us benefit.

When we gather for worship, there are those that will be in pain. When someone may act in a way that upsets you, remind yourself it is because they are likely in physical, mental or spiritual pain. Glorify God in worship by loving them through their pain. This week we continue with our Phase 3 hybrid worship. We are now allowing the sanctuary occupancy to increase so that all who desire to sit in the sanctuary, can do so. However, as I said, this means you must be directed where to sit by an usher so we can continue to keep socially distanced and wear masks for the sake of our sisters and brothers. The leaders will be deciding on the likely final phase at our next meeting on June 13. Pray for your leadership as this has been a painful process trying to make people on all sides of the spectrum feel comfortable with returning to worship. May we always be mindful of our pain and other's pain as we seek to be the church God has called us to be.

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.