

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Recently, I was working on transplanting peonies that came up faithfully for many years, displaying their beauty. I was amazed at the size and depth of the roots. Some roots were as big as tree roots. With roots that deep, and that big, it was no wonder these terribly located flowers came up and grew every year. A root system does many things for a plant, but two that are most important is to secure the plant in the soil ensuring, it won't fall over, and the other is to forge for water and nutrients, to help it grow and blossom. While tirelessly digging out roots, that were not only large but also stubborn to remove, I was reminded of the importance of good spiritual roots, which are necessary to grow and mature spiritually. It is important to be spiritually rooted, to survive the intense storms and those who may come along and try to uproot us from our source of spiritual nurturing. Without good roots, your best beautiful self will not be visible. May we ask ourselves often how are we actively trying to grow our spiritual roots? Maybe it is through bible studies, prayer, meditation, labyrinth walks, fellowship, mission, conversation and care with the least of these. Whatever helps our spiritual roots grow, should be something we try to do more of. For then, we can be the person God created us to be and to have a root system that can continue to collect the sustenance we need.

One way you can also grow those roots, is through worship. We continue in the hybrid phase 4 worship plan. The session met and decided we can not make any changes just yet, until more time has passed, to see how things regarding the pandemic continues to play out. We hope that by sometime in September we will be able to start back with some of our regular programing. As for now, the session acknowledges the CDC newest recommendation and, all though we are not mandating mask wearing, we do encourage everyone to make the decisions about mask wearing that they see best fit for their situation. We will continue with shortened services and socially distancing as much as possible, to help ensure all feel comfortable and welcome. May we tap into our root to recall that we need not fear, but love instead. Love by caring for each other and making each other feel welcome, loved and secure.

In His Peace,

Pastor Nicki

\*If you are worshiping 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.