

Pastor Letter 9/29/21

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I was thinking about how many mistakes I have made in my life that I would not want to be held for today. It's natural and healthy to grow and learn from one's mistakes. Think about something you have done in your past that you now recognize was an error. Would you want to be viewed today as that same person who made that mistake? I highly doubt any one of us would want to be held accountable to the many errors we have made throughout the years. It appears many Christians struggle to not hold other Christians to their mistakes, too. Because of this issue, the church has often been described by nones and dones (no church or done with church) as judgmental and unloving. I just had a conversation with someone who said they are embarrassed to cry in church. Clearly church was not a safe enough space to express that emotion. To combat these views, it becomes our job to create an environment where everybody feels safe to show any emotion, say anything, make mistakes and still feel loved. As we continue seeking our way forward, may we create these safe environments where all can come and be loved no matter what they have done or how they feel.

I will help you begin by sharing that I made a mistake. On Sunday, I was supposed to share with you the exciting work of the 5-7 year planning commission. They have taken the time to review and collect data from the surveys returned. From their work, they have identified several individuals who have common interests with others. In the coming weeks, you may be receiving a phone call from a member of that commission who will share with you the names of others with similar interests. The hope is that you can connect with people on this common interest and create a group that becomes a safe space to enjoy sharing time together. A safe loving church group that others will want to enjoy too. Worship is also a time in which we must do our best to create safe spaces where all feel welcome to join in. It seems fitting to note in this week is World Communion Sunday when we celebrate the Lord's Supper by acknowledging the many differing people who are joining the table around the world. I would invite you to bring along your communion elements as this makes many feel safer. Don't worry though, we do have individual communion elements for anyone who forgets or comes who was not previously informed. May we gather this week and join in creating a safe space for worship of an amazing ever merciful and loving God.

In His Peace,

Pastor Nicki

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.