

October 7, 2020

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

One of my family's favorite activities is hiking or long walks. We find that being in God's creation gives us a break from the world and brings God's peace to the forefront. Finding peace in these divisive times has been difficult for many. What we may have done to find peaceful reprieve may not be a possibility, given COVID-19 restrictions. However, according to Isaiah 26:3, there is a way to find peace anytime. It is by keeping our minds steadfast and trusting in God. In these trying times it is difficult to trust and keep our minds steadfast on God because there is so much fear, divisiveness and unrest trying to pull us away. This means we must actively seek to find ways that bring our minds and hearts back to God for then we can experience God's peace in our lives once again. Spending time in creation is just one way to experience God's peace. Finding God's peace can come in many forms. Prayer, scripture readings, silent meditation, walking or resting in nature and more are ways we can reconnect to God's peace in these trying times. What new or past ways have you reconnected to God's freely offered peace? Practicing these ways that refocus our minds on God's peace will help us make it through all the changes, all the unrest, all the divisiveness surrounding us in these trying times.

One way we also bring our minds and hearts back to Christ's peace is through worship. Our worship continues to look different, but it does not mean it can't still bring us peace. It may not be the same, but it can be just as peace provoking as our former ways of worship if we set our minds on Christ. This week we continue with our phase 1 worship plan. As has been mentioned in weeks past, worship will remain the same until any new direction from the governor is given. This means we continue to allow 25 people in the sanctuary which includes those leading and running technology, but overflow rooms are available to view the live stream. We also continue to also stream live on Facebook and YouTube for those who can and desire to remain worshipping remotely allowing for more room for those who cannot worship at home. Additionally, we are mailing pastor's letters, bulletins, and copies of sermons to those who have no other means of worshipping with us. Furthermore, a new Children's Sunday school box kit will be delivered soon. The pandemic, the civil unrest, and divisiveness may try to take away our focus on God's peace, but God is grace filled and will provide us with opportunities to refocus our minds and hearts on God's peace in many differing ways, even these new ways of worship and Christian formation.

In Christ Peace,

Pastor Nicki

Some helpful links...

click on the link below near the time the service begins at 10:00am to watch the live stream

<https://www.facebook.com/espresbyterian/>

Youtube live and video recordings <https://www.espresbyterian.com/worship/> or

<https://www.youtube.com/user/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/>