

Pastor Letter 10/27/2021

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

In my clinical pastoral education, we are taught that the ministry of presence can be powerful. The ministry of presence is often a puzzling and misunderstood part of being a faithful disciple. Ministry of presence can be practiced by more than just the pastor, as was evident in the positive news video clip that were shared with me this week. The video, which I have shared the link below, is about a high school in Louisiana who was being plagued with fights among students. One father decided enough was enough, so he gathered other fathers and began to show up at the school together, starting a group called Dad's on Duty. They were not trained in any special way, they just showed up, were present, offered this gentle love and jokes reminding students to keep on the right path. Their presence solved the violence problem their school was plagued with. In this case, the ministry of presence was powerful and effective. The most common time we can offer the ministry of presence is in times of grief or crisis. Our role is to be present, not to say anything that is specifically focused on resolving grief or other issues. Rather, to be a ministry of presence, you just show up and offer the support of your presence. Where might you be able to just be present, show up, and share God's love through your presence?

One way we live out the ministry of presence is when we gather. especially in groups where growth happens. because those present made themselves available and vulnerable. As we continue moving forward in new ways. may we offer the ministry of presence to each other, our community, and wherever we feel called to do so. One upcoming opportunity in our community is the Memorial Thanksgiving service on November 21 at 7pm. This is a collaborative service organized by the Clergy group of the Stroudsburgs and the Monroe County United Common Grounds group. Because of the pandemic preventing us from meeting last year. and preventing so many people from having an opportunity to be remembered, the organizing group was asked to create an opportunity to do this as part of our service. We are asking that if you would like to attend. either in person (at ESPC). or virtually and would like to have a name of someone who died since March of 2020 please call the church office to share that name. Being present in this ecumenical service shows support to those in our community who lost loved ones and who want to move forward in thanksgiving for the lives they lived.

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.

Link to video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OdPaqt6RY_Q&t=1s