

October 2020

To the members and friends of the First Presbyterian Church of Everett,

2020 has been quite the year. This year we dug a little deeper to trust God and love our neighbor. We have been stretched, our plans have changed, we have been flexible, we have missed friends and family, we have grieved, and the list goes on. I would never have thought our stewardship goal for this year of Being Still from Psalm 46:10 would mean we would be still. In my mind, I was thinking we would work on being still with Saturday gatherings, guided prayer activities, and sermon series. Instead, we have had plenty of time to be still. We may not have liked it, it may have dragged on too long, or we could be rebelling against it, but God has provided our whole world an opportunity to reevaluate priorities, take a deep breath, and risk being still.

It is a risk being still. Often, we have so many voices, lists, and noise clamoring for our attention that being still can be intimidating. We may not be comfortable with silence. We may not want to investigate our souls. We may not agree with just being, but instead push on with our doing. Personally, while this has been hard being away from you in worship, and I've missed honoring wonderful lives who have entered God's presence, this time has also allowed me my own space to realign with Jesus. When we calm our hearts before the Holy Spirit, stillness can be a gift. My prayer for you is that in unexpected ways, with surprises, and new ways to connect, you too felt the Spirit renew part of you.

To briefly recap our budget this year, we forecast a surplus of \$7,900. Our goal is to be as balanced as we can, but life happens, and this year was full of life happenings. 2020 began strong, yet has proven to be a challenge financially. With lack of in-person worship and regular offerings, combined with our normal costs to maintain our facility, we have a deficit budget of over \$20,000 in 2020. We do have assets to weather this year, but when we have large deficits, we put ourselves in a vulnerable position for future ministry. You can still send your offering through the mail or on-line. We ask you to pray with us trusting in our faithful God to close 2020 well and seek where He leads in 2021.

Yet are you ready to celebrate? Are you ready to relax, shout for joy, and just goof off with friends? I am. Let's celebrate together in 2021! We are going to laugh, encourage each other, share good news, worship joyfully, and use our time, talents, and treasures to honor God gladly. We are not going to ignore life's pain and suffering, but we are going to celebrate this gift of life.

Our 2021 Celebration begins on Reformation Sunday, October 25th. Through Christ the King Sunday, we will be hearing stories of joy and renew our hopes for 2021. On November 22nd, we will dedicate our pledges for the upcoming year. More information will be coming, but remember the Psalmist says,

Sing praises to the Lord, O you his faithful ones, and give thanks to his holy name.
For his anger is but for a moment; his favor is for a lifetime.
Weeping may linger for the night, but joy comes with the morning. (Psalm 30:4-5)

God is with us. This year is just a moment. Our joy with Jesus renews daily.

Peace,



Rev. Dr. Alan Dorway