

*The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?
One thing I asked of the Lord, that I will seek after:
to live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life,
to behold the beauty of the Lord,
and to inquire in his temple.
Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage;
wait for the Lord!*

~ Psalm 27: 1, 4, 14

These words were written in a season of trouble; in a time before LED lamps. A time when light came from the sun during the day and from pottery lamps lit with precious oil at night. And at night the light from those pottery lamps cast just enough light to see a short way ahead.

We are living through a troubled time where we can only see a short way ahead. We thought on March 15th that we would be worshiping at home for, at most, 8 weeks; it has been 12 weeks. And our commitment to waiting at home keeping each other safe from the novel coronavirus COVID 19 has been successful in beginning to flatten the curve. The pandemic has also revealed the fears, inequalities, and deep wounds of racism as well as our propensity for self-centeredness. The pain, fear, anger, and loss are real. We cry out to God – “How Long?”. The yearning to gather with our beloved community to worship and pray is strong.

We do not know what our way forward will look like in a few weeks or years. God gives us a pottery lamp worth of light in order to take a few steps. We must trust God with this light.

Last week the PVEC re-opening team, made up of 12 people from our congregation, gathered to discern what those few steps would be for us. We discussed what it would look like to keep physically distant, wear masks, sanitize and clean our spaces, and keep our community safe while gathering outside or in our building to worship God, serve Jesus Christ, grow disciples and connect with the community.

There is much work to be done to prepare for our first in person gathering. We will be sending out a survey that we hope you will prayerfully answer. After we receive the survey, we will develop guidelines based on your answers, our governor’s directives and our commitment to loving our neighbor and valuing health and wholeness. One thing is for sure, our ways of worshiping will be different.

As we wait for that time when we will be able to gather together remember the Psalmist words. Behold the beauty of our world, trust in the Light that God gifts us, and let your heart take courage!

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you.

Pastor Ninabeth

