

2020 Pastor's Annual Report

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience..... Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Colossians 3:12,14-15

It's been a year for the record books. For the first 11 Sundays of the year, we held worship as usual. On March 22nd we suspended public worship and started to meet online and on the radio. For many it was the first time in recent memory not being in public worship Holy Week, Easter and Pentecost. We resumed in-person worship on June 14th while continuing online worship on Facebook Live and 88.5FM.

While it's easy to recall things we missed (public worship, fellowship time, Lent & Advent meals/worship), I also give thanks for:

- ways we have reconnected with members in the community and thousands of miles away online.
- time you have spent time on the phone, texting and emailing one another to stay in touch and support one another during these trying times.
- quilters who continue their ministry
- confirmation class that is meeting
- weekly lectionary Bible Study
- your response in addressing the repair of the foundation of the Administration Building
- welcoming new members into our congregation

Please know, how grateful I am for:

- your willingness and flexibility in trying new ways of worship and meeting together
- your faithfulness in continuing your gifts to keep PLC strong
- the respect you have shown in regard to each other and how we gather during this pandemic
- for the Church Council members and their hard work in keeping 'the body of Christ' together.

I heard a story about 'staying connected' recently. There was a boy "Sam", who got separated from his dad in a large department store in Seattle. Dad was near the entrance to the store and knew that Sam hadn't left the store. He proceeded to look up and down each aisle trying to get a glimpse of his son. He went past one aisle and then another, peeping to see if he could catch a glimpse of his son. He grew increasingly concerned trying to find Sam in the crowds. He found a security guard and asked him "Do you have surveillance in the store?" He said, "Yes." Then he asked, "Do you have a monitor?" "Yes." "Can I look at the monitor?" "Yes." "Can you scan the floor?" "Yes."

The guard began to scan up and down the aisles, and there he saw his son - Sam, surrounded by toys, yet crying. He was clearly in a state of panic. He was all by himself among people he did not know, lost and alone. Then dad asked the guard, "Do you have an intercom?" He said, "Yes."

I said, "Keep the camera on him." Then dad got on the intercom and said, "Sam." My son looked around because he recognized his dad's voice. "Stay where you are." Sam started looking around. "It's Daddy," I said. "Don't move. I see you although you can't see me. Stay where you are. I'm coming."

Perhaps, there have been days this year when you have felt like that Dad or his son Sam. Days when you think that God cannot see you or that you can't see God. The invisible hand of God is active and looking for you. It's been a tough year and the Church Council and none of us want anyone to get lost in God's vast store.

My prayer is that you will let God find you. For that to happen you need to stay put. Stay connected to God through worship (whether in the sanctuary, on radio or Facebook live). Stay connected with one another through phone calls, texts, email, zoom or getting together in person. Stay connected to God through prayer and personal devotions. Know that God, who is faithful, will find you and then God will use you to find whoever else may be missing in the store, in the harbor, in the pew or on the rock.

And through it all, may the light of Christ surround you, may the Holy Spirit fill you with peace and may you sense the amazing Grace of God each day. Amen
Pastor Eric Olsen