

November 2, 2020

Dear Friends in Christ,

What a year it has been! In January, none of us expected a pandemic, social unrest, hurricanes, fire tornados, derechos, or wildfires. Typically, when disasters strike, churches gather in person to lament, pray, and support one another. However, the pandemic has kept us from meeting in person. And after 7 months, we are all missing the smiles and hugs, our pew buddies, conversations over coffee, gatherings for lunch and celebration, and just stopping by the office during the week. Each of us acutely feels the pain of being apart.

And yet, I take heart that even while we are separated, we are still connected. Paul writes “*You are the body of Christ and parts of each other.*” (1 Corinthians 12:27). As members of the body of Christ, we are all interconnected. “*If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.*” (1 Corinthians 12:26). Thus, when the Care Team make calls and send cards to individuals, we are all reaching out with care and concern. When our calling team, checks in with our members and your pastors call individuals who are in crisis, grieving, or having health issues, we are all offering our gift of presence.

Our online worship enables people to experience our interconnectedness across time zones, hospital rooms, assisting living facilities, and our own living rooms. As we lift our hearts in prayer for one another and the world, we are creating links of caring with each other. Our relationships are also felt when we gather on Zoom to read the Bible, discuss theology, work on upcoming musical pieces or provide a moment of levity, or talk about race and privilege.

We affirm our connection to our wider community when we are the hands and feet of Christ to our neighbors. We see this when we open our parking lot for food and supply drives, drive thru celebrations, pet blessings, and free COVID-19 testing. When we offer our financial gifts to those who lost homes because of wildfires and to missionaries serving around the world, we confirm our interconnection to all of God’s children regardless of whether we ever gather with them in person.

As we consider how we will continue to stay connected in 2021, we hope that you will consider giving generously so that we can continue to bless one another and our community with our gift of relationship. For your convenience, a pledge card and self-addressed stamped envelope are enclosed. If you choose to give, we ask you to return this card by Sunday, November 22 or fill it out online at www.puyallupumc.org/estimate-of-giving.

Regardless of whether you are able to contribute to our budget, please know Puyallup UMC is like a jigsaw puzzle, and you complete our picture!

Peace,

Rev. Cara Scriven
Lead pastor