

## A Note from Pastor Wendy 10

June 6, 2020

As I have tried to think about what to write this week, I have looked back over the many things that have happened in our world, our country and even just within the membership of our congregation since we were called to become "shut in". So many people, with so many viewpoints of what are right or what is wrong. Does wearing a mask make a difference? How long does the virus last on surfaces? Can we catch the virus if we go swimming in a public pool? When can we start eating in our favorite restaurants?

Then we have questions about when are we going to be able to go back to meeting in our churches? Then we hear that the time frame for returning is pushed back—and, there are guidelines that we have to follow. Some people may not think the guidelines are essential. Some may feel that we need more time shut in.

Then, facing our society and us individually, we watch the protests and hear the chants that, "black lives matter". We need to be in prayer about the changes that need to be made to guarantee all humanity is treated with love and worth—that when the oppressed walk down a street they know that they are of the same value as any other human.

So much going on! We, who are called by Christ's name, need to set the example. There is so much need in the world. We are so blessed. I believe that God has given us this "shut in" time to prepare ourselves. To renew ourselves in His Word (feasting in the scriptures) so that when the time does come that our church is reopened, we can come together to minister in a new fashion. Not just to each other, but to move outside those walls that have sat with empty seats between them, and gather people from outside. Bring new people in who are hungering and thirsting to hear the gospel story. We need to have revival and fill the sanctuary with those hungering to feel the love of God.

We know that there are plenty of hurting, angry people out there in our communities. Let's pray about how we can reach out to them and bring ministry to the hurting people in our communities. We are the Highlands Community of Christ. As you pray about this, remember the Enduring Principles: "Sacredness of Creation - Creation's power to create or destroy reminds us of our vulnerability in this life." "Worth of All Persons - We seek to uphold and restore the worth of all people individually and in community, challenging unjust systems that diminish human worth." "Responsible Choices - God gives humans the ability to make choices about whom or what they will serve. Some people experience conditions that diminish their ability to make choices." "Unity in Diversity - We seek agreement of common consent in important matters. If we cannot achieve agreement, we commit to ongoing dialogue and lovingly uphold our common faith in Jesus Christ and the mission of the church." "Blessing of Community - True community upholds the worth of persons while providing a healthy alternative to self-centeredness, isolation, and conformity." "Pursuit of Peace (Shalom) - God wants Shalom (justice,

reconciliation, wellbeing, wholeness, and peace) for all of creation." "All are Called! - Jesus Christ invites all people to follow Him by becoming disciples who share His life and ministry." "Continuing Revelation - In humility, individually and in community, we prayerfully listen to understand God's will for our lives, the church, and creation more completely." "Grace and Generosity - Having received God's generous grace, we respond generously and graciously receive the generosity of others."

This week and until we do return to worship together in our church building, I ask that you focus on these Enduring Principles, reading the scriptures and praying about the ministry God is calling you to provide. I will continue to be praying for all of you, as I hope you are praying for me too. God Bless!