

October 2021 Pastoral Message

The Prayer of Faith

“Are any among you suffering? They should pray. Are any cheerful? They should sing songs of praise. Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up; and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven. Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective.” – James 5:13-16 (NRSV)

Beloved Neighbors in Christ,

Grace and peace be unto you!. Amen.

I want to begin this message by saying ‘thank you’ to all that have made the worship transition beginning last month work so smoothly thus far. I am grateful that the parish has moved from three to two worships on a Sunday morning, and have also kept the combined worships thriving through September. I continue looking forward to this being a successful transition as we move into the next weeks and months.

I came across this reading from the Book of James last week and it has really made an influence on my life right now. COVID continues to be a barrier for so much that goes on in and around our lives, whether we want to acknowledge it or not. The virus has also deterred us from some of the things we have enjoyed and done by ourselves, or with others, over these nearly 20 months. We also know that relationships have suffered as a result of the changes and decisions we have had to make. Good or bad, relationships have faltered...near and far. Families, friends, siblings, and communities are unfortunately at odds sometimes over how to deal with and react with one another depending on where we are in the spectrum of adhering to or going against mandates, rules, and how to respond with the changing landscape of the world.

One thing has remained though. God is still with us. God is still near us. And God continues to guide us. Prayer continues to be the one great thing that we can hang onto to further develop our relationship with the Holy Trinity – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Some of us are suffering and do not know what to do. Some of us are grateful and seem to not have anyone to share it with. Some of us are confused on what to do next. And some of us seek guidance on how or where to do. Beloved, I urge you to use your own voice – through prayer – when and if you find yourself in times of trouble, in times of confusion, in times of happiness, or in times of transition. Let your voice carry you to God who hears you, answers you, and helps you forward.

Bless you all, and I will see you real soon.

Rev. Erik Karlson
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