

For First Pres. Church blog post - May 15, 2020

**I, Cindy,** committed servant of Christ Jesus, friend to First Presbyterian Church of Santa Rosa, write to all God's holy people in Sonoma county, together with pastors and deacons: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I want you to know brothers and sisters, that I miss you terribly! I miss the fun of helping with First Kids church, having conversations with people at church during the week and on Sundays, serving the community alongside other volunteers, and even the banter and sharing that happened during Missions committee meetings.

I thank God every time I remember you. I find myself praying for you with joy because of your partnership in proclaiming God's gospel. As I am joining with others to serve Christ in Colorado, I still feel strongly connected to you as you have been my church family for nearly 20 years.

Continuing to worship together, yet physically apart, is not easily done. Yet, God has made it possible by the gifts of technology and committed Christ followers like you. I thoroughly enjoy the encouraging words that daily uplift many people's hearts both there and here in Louisville. Bible study with Tim Stafford in Santa Rosa and book group studies with people at Grace Commons Church in Boulder are helping me stay centered on our eternal Savior, rather than the confusion and fear of this pandemic. Because of what congregations both here and there are accomplishing for the gospel of Jesus Christ, I rejoice that our growth and joy in this life of trusting God, continue. With virtual "live" and taped recordings, I can enter into multiple worship times on Sundays and during the week. It is God who unites us together, though we are apart. Unity as one church, Christ's body; that is *glorious!*

And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best. And that your love is sincere and intelligent, not sentimental gush. Live a lover's life, circumspect and exemplary, a life Jesus will be proud of: making Jesus Christ attractive to all. For that is God's good purpose and will for each of us.

By Holy Spirit power, I urge you to live in such a way that you are a credit to the Message of Christ. Stand united, singular in vision, contending for people's trust in

the good news, not flinching or dodging in the slightest before the opposition. Your courage and unity will show the victory which belongs to Christ Jesus.

I am looking forward to a fine reunion when I visit you again in California, or you visit me in Colorado. We'll be praising Christ, enjoying each other's stories, and passing the peace and love of our great Lord. The truth is God is Emmanuel wherever we are. And with Christ as our ultimate authority and Savior we are more together than apart. And I can't wait to see what God will do next!