Continuation of Pastoral Letter August 24, 2021 Newsletter

Centuries ago, the Israelites wandered in the wilderness, lost and alone, hungry, and afraid. They had no desire to adopt this "new normal" of displacement and wandering. They cried out. The Lord heard their cries and gave them manna in the wilderness and streams of water in the desert. The Lord brought them to their promised home.

Centuries ago, the Israelites were exiled for a season. They felt abandoned by their God. They felt disconnected from their sanctuary space. They cried out. The Lord comforted them in their exile and brought them home.

Today, we are in our own wilderness. The pandemic has brought with it isolation, confusion, separation, fear, and despair. We thought we had come out of that wilderness, but we wander still in territory we cannot understand or explain. Like those before us, we cry out to God. Where do we turn when we look for God's response?

We turn to prayer. We open space in our lives where we can cry out to God and where we can listen for God's voice in return.

We turn to one another: We find connection with our family, neighbors, friends, and/or faith community. We go where we know we are loved and where we will find strength to love.

We turn to Scripture. We turn especially to the psalmists who wrote about the same feelings we are feeling – and to the prophets who remind us of God's promises to us.

We turn to creation. We find our spirits lifted as we realize the wideness of the universe and the grace of the world.

In this season of uncertainty and change, may your soul wait for the Lord and may you trust God's steadfast love (Psalm 33:20-22). May joy and gladness overtake you, as sorrow and sighing flee (Isaiah 35:10).

With deep love and abiding hope,
Mindy