

2020 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PASTOR

Late in 2020, the daily lectionary offered these words from the first chapter in the book of Revelation: “I am the Alpha and Omega,’ says the Lord God, who is and who was and is to come, the Almighty.” These words of hope and assurance frame a most exceptional and challenging year of 2020.

In January, we began the year with the breath of God inspiring our ministry. Our clear missional vision began in the community with our “Called to Life!” process and reached around the world with sister churches in Colombia and Russia. The wind of the Holy Spirit seemed to be filling our sails as we planned for a week-long summer youth mission journey in Chicago and congregational learning journey to Scotland.

While the COVID-19 pandemic seemed to freeze or alter many of the plans with which we began this year, much has been both uncovered and revealed. Our committees and teams pivoted toward new and truly relevant experiences in our ministry and mission in a time of “social distancing.” Embodying our ministry values of joy and collaboration, accountability and humility, our staff responded with energy, intelligence, imagination and love through all that this year of a global pandemic called from within us. To serve you is a great gift that inspires and humbles me daily.

As we stride into 2021, we know that many life-giving opportunities and challenges await us in this mission to which we are called - to Seek God, to Serve others and Share Christ’s love with all. I trust that you are encouraged by the impact of our ministry in the midst of a pandemic and energized to join us in meeting the opportunities and challenges ahead.

When pilgrims leave the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in Spain, they pass through a door with the Greek letters - *Omega* and *Alpha* - carved in the stonework overhead. Those letters are an enduring blessing for every pilgrim proclaiming - *The End is our true Beginning.*

The end of 2020 is our true beginning for the coming year of our Lord “*who is and who was and is to come.*”