

From the Pastor Emeritus

I cannot begin to tell you how often I have been asked when St. Andrew is going to “get back to in-person worship.” “St. John’s by the gas station is already worshipping in-person. Why aren’t we?” Of course, there are reasonable constraints that keep us from opening wide the doors, and we all know what they are. As I write this missal, plans are underway to begin in-place worship on All Saints’ Sunday, conditions permitting, and I am pleased with this cautionary first step in our getting back together. I am chief among those who miss our weekly in-person gatherings. After all, I am the very first person ever, as this congregation’s Pastor Developer, to invite someone to worship at St. Andrew and I sorely miss those personal moments.

The fact that we miss those worship times, replete with the Eucharist, pipe organ, choirs and personal contacts, hugs, hand-shakes and, not to mention coffee, are all part of an even deeper need that all of these represent. Namely, it is the sense of community that for many of us seems to be missing despite our best technological efforts. Online worship, emails, zoom gatherings, and the like are a Godsend and to one degree or another will continue as a part of our ministry at St. Andrew long after the virus is a distant memory. But presently we want more. It is hard to be patient in these times, but patience is what is most needed if our intended gatherings are to be safe, successful, and sustained.

In the meantime, the congregation council has taken upon itself to put each member of the congregation on its smartphone contact list – no small task for a congregation the size of St. Andrew. You should be hearing from a council member. In addition, the pastors are making pastoral telephone calls to the congregation’s most needful members – pre- and post-surgical folk, home-bound, the bereaved, those with long-term health issues, etc. These phone calls, from lay and clergy, are meaningful ways that we can keep in community as we wait. By the way, have you considered joining those expected to make phone calls? Have you called someone you used to see on Sunday at worship, in Sunday school, at fellowship time? You can readily be a part of this community as you invite someone else to be in community. And I would be remiss as pastor for new member development if I did not encourage you to call a non-member and invite him or her to be in community while you wait. Let’s put our physical time apart to good use as we celebrate the never-ending community that we have through our baptism in Christ.

Grace and peace,

Pastor Pearson