

Good afternoon Church,

I am sure that you have seen the results of the election, and I am sure that those results and the subsequent fallout are stirring emotions within you regardless of your political leanings. I am not an expert in electoral politics nor a political pundit, but I am your pastor, and I would like to do my best to offer some pastoral insight to our shared moment.

As the whirlwind of today and all of its news and emotion swirls around you, I encourage you to make time to be still in a grounding spot. Maybe that is a cozy corner in your house, a bench by the ocean, a path in the woods, a window seat on the train, a table at your favorite coffee shop, wherever you connect with some sense of the broader world outside of yourself. Take some time to think and feel, and as the moments move along and the thoughts pass through, slowly bring your attention to the world around you. See the people walking by, see the wind quietly moving the trees still colored in the warmth of Autumn's palate. See the Ocean keeping its steady cadence as it has since the beginning of time, and the sun as it moves about the sky in the cosmic choreography that has taken place over every moment of your life and over all of life. And with all of this perspective, ask yourself... "Who has God called me to be in this world?" My guess is that this answer is fundamentally the same today as it was yesterday...perhaps more resolute.

Part of the prophetic work of the church is to create a community that is the embodiment of The Kingdom of God on Earth. This is the ministry that Jesus has passed on to us, being a picture, a glimpse of how this world is created to be. Surely, we often stumble and are an imperfect manifestation of that image, but our striving remains no matter the circumstances around us. Our faith and the vision of the world that we glean from scripture and the teachings of Jesus remains unchanged. Our task, to love God and our neighbors, remains.

We will continue to be a community that seeks to embody full inclusivity of race, gender, sexuality, status, ability, etc. We will continue to strive towards caring for one another in the uniquely selfless divine love of Christ. We will continue to be the best stewards that we can of the Earth and all of the creation that we have been entrusted with. We will continue to advocate for justice and peace. We will continue to be motivated by love and not fear, we will lean on the transformational hope found in Christ and not be given into despair or cynicism

This faith that we are a part of has seen governments, world events, tragedies, and triumphs of every kind and still remains. A common refrain throughout scripture, from prophets like Malachi and Isaiah, to the Psalmists, and Paul and Jesus, himself, is that God's character, justice, purpose, and promises remain steadfast regardless of human circumstances. I believe this sentiment is so ubiquitous in scripture because we consistently encounter situations that cloud this perspective. Human circumstances are pretty intense when you are a human being. Surely, we have been and continue to be in an intense experience, which is all the more reason that we need you and your love as a part of the story that is being written in this chapter of human history.

This is true regardless of the results of the election results...we faced major challenges yesterday, we will continue to face them tomorrow. I know that we have a range of political leanings within our

congregation, but for those who are grappling with feelings of despair specifically, I would like to share an excerpt of a writing from Steve Garnaas-Holmes:

Refuse to despair.
Choose courage over selfishness,
trust over fear, love over anger.
You do not know the end of grace.

There is much you cannot change,
but bring healing where you can.
We are not promised to be given light,
but to shine with light.

Don't become an enemy of the world
and its brokenness. Stay tender.
Become a source of comfort and joy for others.
Let this purpose bear you through the darkness
and you yourself will become light.

Take courage; trust grace;
stay connected; practice love.

The work of love continues, dear ones, no matter what.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Cam