



Dear Faith Family,

Letter #46

The texts for the 17th, I Samuel 3: 1-10 [11-20]; Psalm 139: 1-6, 13-18; I Corinthians 6: 12-20; and John 1: 43-51. The guest preacher is Francisco Herrera from the Color Amazed Preaching Project of the NWIM synod.

This past week has been beyond my imagination in so many ways. There have been over two million cases of coronavirus diagnosed in the first nine days of 2021. The prediction is for over a million American deaths by May 1st. We are now susceptible to a new, fast-spreading strain of the virus. The delivery of the vaccine is disorganized and disappointing.

This health crisis has been overshadowed by the chaos in Washington D.C. and the violent attempt to disrupt the democratic process confirming the election. Presiding Bishop of the ELCA, the Reverend Elizabeth Eaton, joined with leaders from the National Council of Churches in an open letter to Vice President Mike Pence, members of Congress and the cabinet, asking for the removal of President Donald Trump from office. [You can find the letter online.]

The latest issue of Sojourner's magazine focuses on the theme, "A Time to Rebuild". As one of the commentaries points out, the Trump presidency has made it clear that white supremacy and racism are not marginal ideologies held by an insignificant number of Americans. On one video of the attack, I was shocked that one of the invaders wore a shirt proclaiming: " six million is not enough"!! The anti-Semitic sentiment was on display in the capitol building of the United States. I could only remember my family members and the many other Americans who lost their lives in WW II fighting to defeat Hitler and Nazi evil. I have no words to describe my reaction to the Confederate flag being carried through the Capitol. "I'm ashamed" doesn't even begin to cover it.

Who were these people who invaded the capitol building? They are our brothers and sisters in Christ. White evangelicals supported the Trump presidency and half of white Catholics joined them. We have family members and neighbors who continue to support Trump. Our work, the hard work ahead of us, is to love our enemies and put our trust and efforts in the teachings of Jesus.

Let us continue to share the love with our family and celebrate their upcoming January birthdays: 14th Stacey Barnhill; 15th Mary Bywater; 21st Laurie Reister and Christine Morgan.

We are all experiencing the painful loss of personal interaction with members of our faith community. We are exploring new ways to connect with each other, so look for future opportunities to gather. The book club is finishing up their current selection and on January 25th will begin a new read: The World Is About to Turn, by Rick Rouse and Paul O. Ingram. The lively discussions take place at 9 a.m. on Mondays. For information, contact Margaret Neighbors at Mneigh67@gmail.com. A real positive about this virtual group is the opportunity to connect with friends who have moved away.

Before the pandemic, a group of women gathered and shared amazing life stories. We could focus on one or two stories each time we gather and leave some time for comments. If you would be interested, contact Pastor Nancy (nancytuna@hotmail.com) or Lisa Therrell (merrymulesears@msn.com).

God bless you in these difficult times.

Psalm 46: 1, 7

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.

Love to you all,
Pastor Nancy