

## HEARTBEATS Staying Connected 4-27-21



Dear Friends in Christ,

ONE AT ONE – Every day this week beginning on Tuesday, April 27, you are encouraged to pray for one minute at one o'clock. This week, pray for our world as many places continue to struggle with the coronavirus. Ask for healing and comfort for those who are afflicted. Pray that those places that are in crisis might receive beneficial help from others.

We enter into a multitude of situations every day and many times it is with expectations, whether we are aware of them or not. When those expectations are not met the way we had wanted, our reaction may be frustration, disappointment, or anger. How we respond to our unmet expectations can have a big impact on our day or much longer.

First, it's helpful to acknowledge that what you are feeling comes from those unfulfilled expectations. Ask why you wanted the outcome you did. If your feelings are strong, consider why it mattered so much that it did not turn out the way you had hoped. Recognize that what you are feeling comes from the fact that you wanted a certain outcome and that that was not what happened.

Next, take a moment to consider why things did not go in the way you would have liked. Were there circumstances beyond your control that resulted in what

happened? Could anyone or anything have changed the outcome? Look at the source of what you are feeling.

Also, recognize that others involved had expectations as well. Perhaps they are disappointed or angry as you are because of a desire for a similar outcome. Or, it may be that others had different expectation—wanting another outcome (perhaps the one that did happen) than you. Why might they have wanted that? How does their hope conflict with yours and why? What value might there be in the results that did occur? Remember, others are not necessarily bound by what or how you expect things to go.

Then, pause before reacting. Lashing out in anger or passive-aggressive frustration will not help the situation or resolve your feelings. Instead, seek to gather information by making “I” statements: “I was hoping that...” or “I really thought that...” and direct those statements toward those who can provide insight to the situation. Then allow for responses that might explain and give greater clarity. There may be more going on than what you had previously considered. Assuming that someone else should have responded or behaved in a certain way may fail to take into consideration circumstances about which you were unaware.

Often, our expectations are heavily influenced by past experience. As we are coming ever nearer to a time when we will return to in-person worship in the church building, we will at least be inclined to think that things will be just like they were before. Most likely, they will not—at least not for a while, anyway. Our worship experience will be affected by the expectations we bring and how we let those expectations impact us. Again, it’s always better to seek information to better understand why things were done they way they were. The more we can let go of our expectation, the more likely we are to have a good experience and not be distracted by feelings of disappointment, frustration, or anger that reflect that for which we had hoped.

In Christ's love,  
Pastor Jeffrey