

HEARTBEATS – Staying Connected 9/17/2021

Dear Friends in Christ,

I truly believe that God brings good out of bad. It's not always in the same measure, but it is good nevertheless. There are times when we can't see the good or at least not right away. But, given time, when we look, we often can find it.

The pandemic has not been a good thing. Many have died and many more have been extremely ill. It has disrupted our lives and our relationships. As a church, it has impacted what we were used to doing in many ways. But God has brought good out of all of this as well. Here are some things that I have seen that I believe are the good God is bringing:

- Many now feel a stronger sense of gratefulness for our times of worship together. Though we still have to wear masks and space ourselves, we are glad to be able to come together to worship God.
- We have grown in our vision for how we can do worship. It does not always have to be done in the same place and in the same way. The important thing is our focus on praising and receiving from God. The where and the how have become much less important than the what.
- The blended service that we are doing right now has helped a number of people to have a greater appreciation for the aspects of worship that are different from the type of service they used to attend. Though it is not what they might choose if we were able to offer two unique services right now, many are finding value in the qualities of both types of worship.
- The isolation caused by the pandemic has helped us to become more aware of the needs of those who live in isolation all the time. We have improved the ways that we are able to connect with others, and especially with those who previously were often missed.
- Nearly all of us have grown in our use of technology and have found it to be a tremendous resource for connecting with each other safely. It has also allowed us to reach and include people with whom we would not otherwise be engaging.

Again, the pandemic has not been good. But God has worked through the pandemic and through us to bring good out of bad. Take time to look around and see what you can find that God is doing and then be sure to offer your praise to God.

In Christ's love,
Pastor Jeffrey