

Dear Friends,

I write to you today from Palo Alto and San Anselmo, California. Part of my work over the last year has been with San Francisco Theological Seminary and the Janie Spahr Initiative - an outreach for Justice and Love in the Presbyterian Church (USA). These are folks you would love - for their spirit, their heart and for their determination that this world will be a better place for all if they have anything to say about it! They remind me of you!

The last time we gathered was in June of 2016, so there has been some catching up to do, as well as planning for change! I listen to myself talking with my friends and colleagues here about the wonderful congregation I have been called to serve. Over and over again, I am reminded how *kairos* surround us; how God's time does have a rhythm and a tempo and a purpose to it that is impossible to predict and that is unrelenting in its love. With time, I continue to learn how to be open and welcoming to "letting go" of worry and outcomes. I learn instead to trust in this unbound and unrelenting God and in *God's time*, putting one foot in front of another, day by day.

It's how I came to you; so, I know it works! :)

This Sunday, our reading will be Psalm 23. I imagine that most of the world knows or has heard "the 23rd Psalm" at one point in time or another. I also imagine that many of us have sat quietly with the words of this prayer when comfort and hope needed a touch of grace, when *God's time* was needed in our soul. There are not many short works, scriptural or otherwise that have such easy access to the heart.

And, it seems right that as we approach Easter, now less than a month away; as we inch nearer to the Week of the Passion of Christ - that we allow the discomfort of past and present times to touch our heart, for that, too, reflects our humanity. Sorrow, as a touchstone of life is unavoidable; our own trials remind us of that. And, we know that days ahead for Jesus bring this and more to the forefront of our worship and meditations. We also know that deep inside us all there is *something* the psalm reveals, something that shines through even the cloudiest of moments. It's the promise I think; the promise that we are loved every moment of our lives by a God that entered into this world to make sure we knew that beyond any shadow of a doubt.

And therein exists the unlimited joy that underpins all of life and eternity: God's love for us and our shared love of one another. It's a combined God-presence that is totally reliable and absolutely inexhaustible! "Good News!", I say!

Friends, thank you for all the ways you share this love and Good News with which we have been blessed, and if you get a chance, maybe check in on someone who just needs to hear that gentle voice of yours! It gets lonely now and then for someone who just crossed your mind! :)

See you soon,

Peace,
Ray

See you soon,

