

A Word on Wednesday from Pastor Tonia

"Living Among God's Faithful People" 8/10/22

Every time you cross my mind, I break out in exclamations of thanks to God. ... I am so pleased you have continued on in this with us ... So, this is my prayer: that your love will flourish, and you will not only love much but well ... making Jesus Christ attractive to all, getting everyone involved in the glory and praise of God." (Phil 1:3-11)

How we live is a witness to our faith. We reflect our faith to those with whom we live. We do not go through life by ourselves.

When we look at the situations we have faced, we realize - I got through this because I was not alone. God accompanied me and I was surrounded and supported by God's faithful people.

These are the people who support us. To whom we turn when things go badly, when we hurt, when we feel we've been treated unfairly. They encourage us and strengthen us to go on? They put their arms around us, surrounding us with love and prayer. They hold us up as we limp along.

We are called to live together, in community, with God's faithful people. We realize we are not alone as we rejoice, as we struggle, as we make life changing decisions. We are accompanied by people who understand, who have gone this way before us. Just as we were helped in our struggles, we are blessed to accompany others when they face the same difficult demands and decisions.

Once clothed in Christ, we find a unity in Christ. We are church together because of Who we worship, not separated by how we worship. We are the one body of Christ and we come together to love and support each other in our common ministry of loving others, feeding the hungry, and caring for those in need.

The Holy Spirit has changed us all, our hearts and desires are made new in baptism. We desire to meet together, to sing, pray, and worship – with others. We want to break bread together. We want to give and receive God's love.

All are welcome and the whole is not complete without each of us. We know something is missing when we don't gather together with others.

When we live among God's faithful people, we recognize our brokenness, and we recognize our unity in the body of Christ. Our life, the life of the church, the entire body of Christ is transformed as we come together for worship, for ministry, for fellowship. Our new self is seen by others as we live out the promises we made in our baptism.

We give thanks for the gift of the church. For those with whom we live and serve. Those who ride the waves with us. Those who have taught us what it means to walk with Jesus, those who have instructed us in our faith, who have prayed with us, encouraged us, and modeled faithful living for us. Those who have shown us how to mentor others in the way of God.

My prayer for you is that your love may flourish, and You will not only love much but well, making Jesus Christ attractive to all, getting everyone involved in the glory and praise of God.

Please pray with me. God of the journey, thank You for traveling with us, for guiding us, protecting us, and loving us, for sending others to accompany us on this journey. I agree to keep my covenant to live among God's faithful people and I pray You will help and guide me so to do.

Amen