

Pastor Letter 2/16/22

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

“Long-haul Covid” a term which, a little over two years ago, didn’t exist, got me thinking about suffering that is long-haul and how Christ’s disciples can encourage those who are experiencing long-haul suffering. When someone is sick or has an injury that we know is temporary, we are there with encouragement and support to see them through it. Yet, when someone has a situation or a health condition that is a long-haul, it is much harder to find the encouragement they need. As Christ’s disciples, we are called to encourage one another in all times even the long-haul, but that is often where we lack.

For those of us who are fortunate to have great memory that remembers peoples’ continued suffering, continuing encouragement is easier. For those of us, like myself, who are not gifted in this area and need reminders for most things, we can look to the Bible and find a two-part process to help us be better long-haul encouragers. The first part is remembering. Seek ways to keep the long-haul sufferers in mind. For me, I put it in my calendar to touch base and to set an amount of time, depending on the situation and need. For example, I try to reach out to the deceased one’s family 6 weeks after a funeral as this is typically when the dust settles, and grief can become greater. For those who are more tech savvy, there are apps and other electronic reminders that can be set.

The second part is to show up. There are many examples of long-haul encouragement through showing up in the Bible. One example is 1 Samuel 23:16 which shares how Jonathan offered his long-haul encouragement to David as he was continuing his flee from Saul who sought to kill him. This example is one way to continue to show up as the problem persisted. Showing up looks different though in our modern context. Examples of showing up can be: 1) physical presence like David was given; 2) Zoom or facetime where you can at least see person eye to eye; 3) a phone call; 4) email, text, snail mail. The key is first to remember and second to show up in the best way possible that meets the needs of the suffering individual. There are many long-haul sufferers around us so, as Christ’s disciples, may we seek to encourage those who are experiencing long-haul suffering by remembering and showing up.

In His Peace,

Pastor Nicki

YouTube: live stream and recording can be found at <https://www.espresbyterian.com/worship/> or <https://www.youtube.com/user/ESPresbyterian>

Facebook: click on the link below near the time the service begins at 10:00am to watch the live stream <https://www.facebook.com/espresbyterian/>

Additionally, bulletins and an online hymnal have been put on the website and can be found at <https://www.espresbyterian.com/worship/sunday-bulletin/>

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