

Fellowship in Christ

As more people get vaccinated, we start to see the number of worshippers in church grow little by little. If you're coming to in-person worship, you may have started to see more old, new faces, people you haven't seen in a while that are back to church. And that's a great joy! One of the purposes of belonging to a church is the fellowship you enjoy with others that share the same faith. The third article of the Apostles' Creed says that "I believe in the communion of saints". And its meaning becomes more relevant when we are able to meet again in church to worship together. The Psalmist puts it this way, "How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity!... For there the Lord bestows his blessing, even life forevermore." (Psalm 133:1, 3b).

If we have learned something from the coronavirus pandemic is the value of relationship, the importance of family and friends and the irreplaceable good of personal touch. It's true that we have also learned to use technology (e.g., Zoom) in order to stay in touch with others, and we thank God for that, but at the same time it's also true that we have learned to value our get togethers, our family meetings and our worship together, all of which we took for granted. But all in all, we are by nature social creatures and we need to stay in touch with others as part of our wellbeing.

The wonderful lesson of this new experience we've all gone through is that God has been faithful, and he himself wants to be in relationship with his creation. After the fall of Adam and Eve, God's great intention was to restore the broken relationship that sin created. That separation was a chasm that we could not cross by ourselves. Actually, we were dead in our transgressions and sins (Ephesians 2:1) and without God's mercy in Christ, we would have been lost forever. But God sent his son Jesus Christ to pay for our sins, and by dying on the cross, he reconciled us to God and to one another. So, through faith in him, we are restored to a pristine condition, by which we enjoy forgiveness of sins and fellowship within the body of Christ that is the church.

Probably we were taking fellowship for granted and this virus crisis have made us reconsider it and value it all the more. But most importantly, we need to go back to the foundation of such fellowship, which is Christ, the one by whose death, reconciled us to God and to one another. Christian fellowship is essential to spiritual growth. Many aspects of our spiritual lives depend on being together with other believers to encourage, teach, serve, and share life together. We need to be connected to one another in order to enjoy the new life we have in Christ. Amen.

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