
**A WORD
FROM
PASTOR
MATT**

Community

At a time like this, we have been learning and trying to do new things. There has been a lot of change and it has been hard to keep up with the times. We have to be creative and innovative, simply because we have to adapt to the world in which we live. And we all have been adapting and doing that in different ways. There have been many changes not only to our personal lives, but to our faith lives as well. We have to adapt there as well. There has been a huge learning curve for us and for the staff, as we have sought new ways to worship, gather, and live out our faith. In the last seven months, as our community has been physically separated since the onset of the virus, we have been longing for all to be gathered at FLC, but also know that is not entirely possible. We miss seeing and connecting with everybody. For that very reason, we will be trying something new to reconnect us again.

One new thing we are trying to do this coming Advent is starting (*or restarting*) small group ministry. The Spirituality & Wellness Ministry is planning to use the Advent devotional *I Wonder as I Wander* by Andrew D. Haugen to start the small group ministry. This four week devotional beginning on Sunday, November 29, will explore the themes of hope, love, joy and peace, and will provide a framework for our one hour a week time together. The devotional will be provided at no cost to you and will be available at the church for pick-up starting in November. We will meet weekly on Tuesday evenings at 7 p.m. either at FLC in person (*8 in a group, plus one leader*), or online via Zoom for a conversation on each weekly topic. We will get to see one another and share in each other's faith lives, which is very important. It's hard to be isolated so long. I believe we need to be together and connected in some new way.

We would love for you to be a part of this new way to gather together safely. If you would like to join a small group, there are a couple different ways to join. The first way to join is to respond to the survey that will be emailed to you at the beginning of November asking whether you would like to be a part of a small group. Another way to join, would be to call (703-505-9517) or email me directly at mkamprath@firstgeneseo.org indicating whether you would like to join a group in person, or online via Zoom. There will be more information about this in November's Chimes and this will also be in the announcements in First Day.

If you are like me, maybe you are longing for community too. If so, this would be a great opportunity to join something new and explore our faith together as we bear one another's burdens, pray together, read Scripture, and share in the hope, love, joy, and peace of Christ. We hope to see you again.

In Christ,
—Pastor Matt