
**A LETTER
FROM
PASTOR
MATT**

Patience

Judging by the title of this newsletter article, you could probably easily guess that this will be about patience, and our lack thereof. You're right. We struggle with being patient. I struggle with being patient. Period. I know very few people who weren't climbing the walls during the quarantine either to get out and have a little freedom unburdened by four walls, or just to simply see again people they love. I am in that boat. I have realized in the midst of all of this, that I don't have the patience of a saint. I thought that being a pastor for almost ten years has taught me a little bit more about patience, because in the church everything moves a little slower, it takes time to build relationships, and to do ministry, and to craft a sermon, and we have to wait for God to act, but I digress. Most of the time, I still find myself often impatient with myself or others. Are you in that boat too?

Thankfully, there are a bunch of Bible verses that stress often the need for patience. "Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant." (*1 Corinthians 13:4*) "Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer." (*Romans 12:12*) "I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love." (*Ephesians 4:2*) "The Lord is good to those who wait for him, to the soul who seeks him. It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord. It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth." (*Lamentations 3:25-27*). I could keep going on showing different verses about bearing patience, and thankfully it does help to know that this has always been a struggle for people of faith, but being patient is still a lot of work and it is

something I have had to bear. There is a duty to sit and be patient. Often enough though, I am finding out that after being forced to be a little more patient during this pandemic, that this duty surprisingly enough, turns into a delight.

Scripture takes its time to remind us, to take our time, for in God's time, we wait. The time we have been given is a gift from God. I believe with all of my heart that it takes eyes of faith to see that this time we are living in, is still a gift. We are called in this time to trust that there has been so much time before us, times that have been as difficult as this, and there will be so much time after us, as we bear patience together for God to act. We wait together for there to be healing. We wait together for an end to division. We wait together for there is nothing better to do right now. We wait together, for in all times, it is God's time, of which we see only a sliver.

As we return to worship inside the church building this August after four months of a pandemic and still very much in the middle of one, may we again be reminded to be patient. Please be patient, when things are not the way you remember them for worship. It will be very different and we are grieving this loss too. Please be patient with others who may express other opinions from the ones you hold. Please be patient with those who are making decisions and are leading, for its difficult leading in this time. Please be patient when things might change yet again. Please bear patience with yourself and with others, for in doing so, we bear one another in love as we have first been supported and strengthened in love for all time, Amen.

—Pastor Matt