



The Pastor's Portion

June 21, 2020

Spiritual Nourishment for the Soul

WHERE THE DOORS OF THE CHUCH SWING OPEN ON THE HINGES OF LOVE AND PEACE

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This is the day that the Lord has made, we shall rejoice and be glad in it.

Welcome to Summer! It seems that since March, our nation and our church have been through so much, and the ground is STILL shifting beneath our feet, even as I write.

It is natural in these times to try to return to "normal" as quickly as possible so that we can find our footing. I understand, but we cannot ignore that our world is changing and that we are in unprecedented times.

In this season, I encourage you to revive your creative imagination. Think **OUT OF THE BOX** to envision what the "church" could and should be.

Are we really committed to being a church that embraces **ALL**? That respects all, and that strives to follow Jesus in justice, love peace and simplicity?

Normal will probably not be again. The world and the church are in need of a moral revival.

Won't you join me in re-imagining what West Center can be? Won't you join me in pursuing racial conciliation, peace, justice and a true measure of harmony in our world? It will take courage, and the shedding of ego and agendas. It will take willingness to change and to grow. And it will not be easy.

In the words of that old Spiritual: "nobody told me the road would be easy, but I don't believe you've brought me this far to leave me!"

God is with us! Ever present, ever luring us into the realm of the Spirit, ever luring us to seek justice, to love mercy and to walk humbly with our God.

NEW LOG IN CREDENTIALS FOR SUNDAY WORSHIP AND WEDNESDAY PRAYER/STUDY.

Join Zoom Meeting **BY VIDEO**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87330604676>

Meeting ID: 873 3060 4676

BY PHONE:

646-558-8656 **ACCES CODE** 87330604676#

JOIN US FOR MID WEEK BIBLE STUDY ON WEDNESDAY AT 7PM

BY VIDEO

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87567605330>

meeting ID: 875 6760 5330

BY PHONE 646-558-8656 ACCESS CODE: 87567605330#

⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹² For our^[b] struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. ¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. ¹⁴ Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness. ¹⁵ As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ With all of these,^[c] take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷ Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. ¹⁸ Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints. ¹⁹ Pray also for me, so that when I speak, a message may be given to me to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel,^[d] ²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it boldly, as I must speak.”

Ephesians 6: 10-20

This passage from Ephesians tells us that the forces of the evil of racism and inequity in our human family are bigger than us. Our nation is in a battle for its very soul, and as the people of God, we are called to stand against the forces of evil. In this passage, Paul is urging the church he started to pray for him, because he indeed was confiscated by God to spread the good news of the Gospel of Jesus, He was compelled, as am I to speak and preach the gospel in dangerous and difficult circumstances. I solicit your prayers.

Since my last report to the church in April, so much has happened. We are in the midst of very challenging times in our nation's history, and we as the church must speak to and minister to these times. This is our mission. This is our ministry.

In envisioning the future of West Center, and while preparing to call the next Pastor, West Center boldly proclaimed:

“We'd like the church to be a true representation of our community in its diversity in age, race, household composition, and sexual orientation but common in spiritual goals, love of and service to God. We are looking to draw in the community to engage in fellowship and spiritual growth. Besides being a

house of worship, we'd like the church to be integral to the community by providing and promoting not only spiritual programs/studies but also secular programs, events and interest groups that are of true interest to the community. We'd like to update and utilize technology for more effective ministry and outreach, i.e. web streaming, social media and improved audio/visual. Who are we? Our former pastor wrote: “Our West Center is more than a building and a history, our Church is people and programs, working together, growing together, to build up the Household of God the Community of Faith in service to the world.” Who is our neighbor? Anyone who wants to journey with us or needs us to journey with them. Who is God calling us to become? Better Christians, through prayer, study, meditation and action.”

BE THE CHURCH