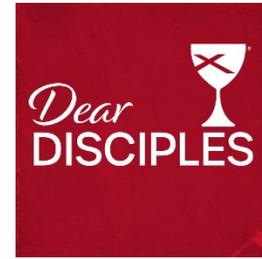


Dear Disciples

May 28, 2021



Hello, Disciples. I hope that your Pentecost celebrations in worship were full of revival and fresh fire, fresh wind, to carry us forward into these still uncertain and unprecedented times.

Even as we see hope and light before us after 15 months of pandemic, we needed to be reminded that God was sending us a special Helper, a gift, Jesus said, someone who would help us to remember all that Jesus had taught. I read this week in my Bible study in the book of Joshua, the third chapter, as the children of Israel are on the edge of the river Jordan, preparing to cross over into Canaan.

God speaks to Joshua and says, "Have the priest to carry the Ark of the Covenant before the people and tell the people to follow it, because you have not passed this way before."

What God was saying was, "Follow me. I know that you haven't been here before, but I am with you, and if you will just follow me, we will make that journey into that land of hope and light."

On Pentecost Sunday, Jesus' followers had been through a season of disruption and trauma. The resurrection had happened but they still weren't sure quite what was next. We've been through 15 months of pandemic. We have adjusted, and adapted, and continued to do ministry despite trauma and pain and the loss of so much life. The devastation of so many parts of our economy. The violence that still continues to plague our country.

But we are now seeing a point where restrictions are being lifted. More of us are being vaccinated. We're asking the questions, "Can we be in the same room together, mask or no mask? In person on the parking lot? Hybrid worship? Still online? Lord, what shall we do?"

I want to point you back to that edge of the river Jordan, where God says, "Follow me, because you've not been here before." God knows, church, that we have need of God's guidance. God also knows that we are so capable of bearing witness to God's limitless love.

I invite you to just stay with God. Continue to pray. Continue to spend time with the Holy. Continue to engage that sacred text so that you will immerse yourself in God's presence, remembering all that Jesus taught. Filled with that fresh fire and fresh power from on high, there are still a ways to go. There is still a new place to which we must travel as church, a new church, with the courage to imagine who we must be how we must serve, how we shall live in this new time and space.

I'm encouraged because I'm reminded that God knows that we have not passed this way before. So let's follow God. Let's stay with God. Let's be with God as we move forward into hope and light, filled and encouraged, emboldened and inspired by the very Spirit and presence of God. Let's go, church. We've not passed this way before, but God is with us, and we must simply follow where God leads. My prayer for you is that you will hear. You will listen. You will follow. God loves you, Disciples. God loves you, and so do I.