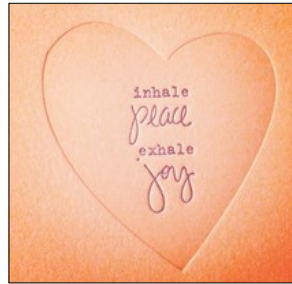




Pastoral Update—November 13, 2020



*“Jesus rebuked the wind and said to the waves, ‘Peace! Be still!’
Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.” Mark 4:39*

Searching for an Advent logo, I came across this image: **“Inhale peace, Exhale joy.”** While it won’t serve as our logo, it’s quite fitting for the present week at Desert Cross and in our nation! We practiced this with prayer at our zoom Chamber meeting on Monday, and I invited everyone to make a daily practice of deeply inhaling peace and exhaling joy in these times that are far from peaceful or joyful.

These days are as chaotic as the storm that rocked the boat for Jesus and the disciples. Jesus’ words, *Peace! Be Still!* brought calm to the waves and bring calm to our hearts. Our presence of mind can make a difference in how we approach and respond to the chaos. This enables us to inhale peace and exhale joy even in difficult circumstances!

Here are some highlights from a very busy week for Desert Cross:

- We hired an excellent A/V Engineer as our Production Manager for the livestream! We all met at church with Lindsay and Andreas Viker, who are generously collaborating with us to produce a quality livestream. It will take several weeks to rework and set up the equipment properly.
- We are busy worship planning for Advent and Christmas and dreaming up new possibilities in the midst of all our extreme limitations and ever-changing pandemic landscape.
- Pastor Doris came back from medical leave on a limited, virtual only basis to preach and lead worship until her last Sunday on December 27th. A virtual farewell reception of thanksgiving for her ministry with us is pending for the 27th. We give thanks for her healing and return!
- We are planning a virtual Congregational Budget Meeting on December 6th. Details coming!
- Our new Associate Pastor, Rev. Thaddeus Book (“Pastor Thadd”), has a target start date of January 10th at Desert Cross! Installation details are pending.
- Our worship director, Daniel Decker, has been delayed from returning from a family trip to Armenia. He has been working during the delay and can do all he did virtually from home! Our worship video for 11/15 has been produced and posted on YouTube by Daniel from Armenia!
- We have a new Gilbert worship assistant scheduler, Sharynn Jennings. We give thanks to Sherry Branham for her previous service in this position. Thanks to Nancy Zine for training Sharynn!

These are just the highlights of the past week. It was a chaotic, busy, and sometimes stressful storm, especially in the midst of our national unrest. Yet, Jesus’ voice calms the storm. Peace! Be still! We have much for which to give thanks with joyfull hearts.

Inhale peace, Exhale joy!

Pastor Andrea