



## Pastoral Update—September 4, 2020

*See, I am doing a new thing!* Isaiah 43:19

### ***What's New?!***



God's love makes a way where there is no way. God's grace makes us new every day. Faith sets us free to trust God and step into new ways. Desert Cross is not about status quo. We are innovating new roads through the pandemic. Our staff teamed up to create new ways of worship, education, and service.

Our newest endeavor is the monthly education "Playlist" that brings faith formation to your home or anywhere. This new way to learn and connect enables multi-generational, diverse-learning-style, independent, learn-at-your-own-pace discovery of our timely September topic, *Justice*. Here's what people are already saying:

- "Wow...wonderful work. I'm enjoying participating in parts from each area."
- "Wow, does our adult education ROCK!!!! ... our first edition of Adult Playlists on Justice should win awards!!! Thank you for encouraging us all to be open and aware of issues that Jesus would be involved in today."
- "This is an incredible resource."

I hope this inspires you to try the Adult, Youth, & Children's Playlists! Go to <http://www.desertcross.org/> to experience all the new ways we are connecting with you and the community! We have mobilized to create weekly online worship with a Desert Cross YouTube channel. We moved staff, council, chamber, endowment, and finance meetings online and became "Zoomers." High School Night and Christ Care soon followed. Then a church contact network, daily devotions, a virtual dialogue on *Just Mercy*, and a weekly virtual gathering, *Zoom Chat Pray*, were created. We supported a COVID snack delivery mission that rose up from the congregation! In a time that felt desperate, God helped us make a new way to connect, worship, learn, and serve together, and we're not done yet! Watch for our creative, new Online Stewardship platform coming soon as well as the possibility of a virtual congregational meeting!

Guess what else is new? Arizona is now in the Moderate "yellow zone" for reopening. That means we are getting closer to thinking about getting back together in-person with many modifications. Watch for details coming soon from our excellent Reopening Team who are developing safety protocols so we can come together safely to worship.

Our way of life has been turned upside down by a global pandemic, economic uncertainty, and escalated racial tension, yet God has made a way. Where God did a new thing and made a way for the Israelites in exile, Jesus' death and resurrection made a new way for us. He said in Revelation 21:5, *I am making everything new!* Hang onto Jesus' promise that by his grace, he makes us new each day.

Thanks be to God!

*Pastor Andrea*

P.S. Bring your bibles to worship this weekend. Our annual 2<sup>nd</sup> grade bible blessing includes everyone! And have a small bowl of water/olive oil ready for a special healing service. "See" you in worship!