

Dear Friends,

There are lots of things that disturb us in the world. There are lots of pains, sorrows, and worries that flood our hearts, minds, and lives. When talking with our Pizza and Social Justice youth after the shooting in Uvalde, we talked about prayer and the things we do we restore ourselves. Some said music or friends or being in a special place helps them get through the tough times.

To really strive for justice, it cannot start and end with the total eradication of racism, sexism, homophobia, or white nationalism is totally eradicated, then the world will be at peace so we have to destroy them as fast and as soon as possible. It starts with love, the love of God and the love in our hearts and lives. Just like anything else in our world, it needs to be nourished and grown. If we lose our love, then we will become what we are struggling against and be lost in fear, hate, and despair. Our worship should help us hold onto and nourish love, as are many other practices you have in your life. They should ground us, heal us, and strengthen us to heal this world and defeat the powers that seek to tear this world apart.

There are many things that can grow our love. Our faith gives us prayer, meditation, songs (singing, playing, listening), reading and writing, silence, and listening to the wind on the leaves, the waves on the shore, and the birds in the air. And God has given all sorts of ways through hobbies, groups, arts, and exercise that can help us keep our sanity, grow our love, and help us be healthy enough to strive for God's kingdom.

Unfortunately, it is not all is lost or all is well. Each of us has the power to do good and to do evil. Many who do wrong think they are doing it for the right reasons. We ground ourselves in the love of God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit, along with our families, friends, and community to make sure in our zeal for justice, we don't use vengeance, hate, and violence.

Peace is not the absence of violence or hatred. Peace is the presence of light, of love, and harmony. Remembering we are connected, we are loved, and we can take care of each other, even when, especially when, we disagree. Let us love like Jesus loves.

Peace

Pastor Enno