

## Pastor's Ponderings - NOVEMBER 2022

*God has made everything beautiful in its time... and set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end.*

-Ecclesiastes 3:11

I have always liked this time of year. There is something intriguing and mysterious about the late fall, deep autumn, when shadows and nights are lengthening, and sun and warmth are receding. Halloween is born of this sensibility—this sense of mystery in the air. But mystery need not be spooky. Our awareness of mystery is our awareness of God, an awareness of the divine realities of the world in which we live and the lives we have been given.

I read an article recently titled “In Praise of Bewilderment.” The author’s point was that it is good to be bewildered because bewilderment—lack of clear and certain understanding, is what opens us to mystery and opens us to deeper truths. If you look carefully and with an open mind, everything really is bewildering.

Bewilderment has come easy over the past few years. Things have happened I did not know were possible. Things have happened that no one understood. Big things. No one knew what to do, even those giving guidance and espousing expertise. Better to be bewildered than to pretend there is no mystery.

The world is filled with mystery. The unfathomable creation of an awesome God beyond all understanding. Bewilderment should lead us to awe and wonder at mystery of life.

Another article I read recently was called “Navigating the Mysteries,” which posed the question: “what if we reframed ‘living with uncertainty’ to ‘navigating mystery?’ The idea here is that it is not helpful to say we live in uncertain times, although we certainly do. It is more helpful, more energizing to recognize that mystery permeates life at all times.. Certainty is always a temporary artificial pretense, an attempt to conceal or ignore mystery.

So, as November takes us further into darkness and into the Advent season of preparation once again for the coming of Christ, let us delight in living our lives in the mystery of God. As the Apostle Paul puts it, “set your minds on things above. For... your lives are hidden in God with Christ” (Col. 3:2-3). Allow bewilderment to remind you of the things above, and remember the things above are also all around us. We live in the mystery of God.

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