

Dear Friends,

After worship, during our breakout sessions, John Bottger mentioned something about the shooting in Club Q. I didn't notice the outside world Sunday morning so missed the news. Another shooting, this time in Colorado Springs. My heart skipped a beat because one of my cousin's kids' lives there and is a transgendered woman. I got home and quickly scanned Facebook and saw she marked herself safe.

Monday morning, I messaged her asking if she was there or were any of her friends involved. She replied she and her friends are homebodies, so weren't around there. I was thankful, but realizing she could have been there, thinking it was a safe place, one of the very few in that hyper patriotic-evangelized community.

With the continued violence and dysfunction of our country and world, how do we keep sane and grounded in God's love? The answer according, Brene Brown, is resilience. In our scripture reading of Revelation, we were called to endure. How do we do this? Brene Brown picks it up again and says it is grounded in gratitude. Diane Butler Bass also echoes this in her book, "Grateful."

"Gratitude is complicated. Feelings of dependence – and interdependence – can be both elusive and resisted, mostly because they are caught up with soul-crushing ideas of obligation and debt. But if gratitude is mutual reliance upon (instead of payback for) shared gifts, we awaken to a profound awareness of our interdependence. Dependence may enslave the soul, but interdependence frees us. More than two centuries ago, German theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher referred to this experience as the 'feeling of absolute dependence.'" To him, absolute dependence was not demeaning. It was more like what we describe as interdependence. He recognized that gratitude was the truest state of reality- everything exists in an infinite relationship of gifts to everything else – and it was also the starting place for a life of meaning, as our own awareness opens toward others, the world, and, ultimately, God." (Grateful, Diane Butler Bass, p. 22)

Let us dig into our Thanksgiving Weekend, thinking and searching for all the things we are grateful for and how we are truly all interdependent and brought together in love.

Peace

Pastor Enno