

Growing Core Team 2020-2021 Annual Report

When I was growing up in Southern California and attending a very small Lutheran school, we used scripture and prayer to set the rhythms of our day. As part of that, we closed each day before being dismissed with a verse from a hymn recited as a prayer. *Abide with me, fast falls the evening tide/ the darkness deepens, Lord with me abide/ when other helpers fail and comforts flee/ help of the helpless, oh abide with me.*

I'm pretty sure that ten-year-old me wiggled through most of that because I wanted to get out of the classroom and go home, and it wasn't until a few years later that the meaning of the words sank in. It came back to me a lot over the course of 2020 as many of the comforts we'd all come to depend on—treating ourselves to dinner at a restaurant, spending time with friends, worshiping communally on Sundays, and even something as basic as hugs from people who care—were stripped from us. Because even with all of that, I never doubted that God was abiding with me, with the people I love, and with the communities that I care about, including Cross of Christ.

God definitely was abiding with the Cross of Christ community this past year. While the Growing Core Team ministries—including children's and adult faith formation programs—weren't able to meet in person physically, and the volunteer Sunday School coordinator never did manage to pull something together for virtual programming (that's me, and pandemic-schooling my three kids was an adventure that soaked up all of my time), Pastor Dave buckled down almost every week to provide an online adult faith formation opportunity with his "The Pastor's Study" series.

I look forward to getting back to Sunday School this fall: seeing how much the kids have grown, welcoming the ones who will be new to the class, and getting back to learning about our faith and the world and our faith *in* the world with them. There are also plans to continue to record Pastor Dave's adult faith formation classes even when

he's doing them—LIVE AND IN PERSON, even!— on Sunday mornings and to keep putting those up on the web as well.

With much thanks for the Lord who abides with us always,

Kristie Walker

Growing Core Team Leader