

Trust God from the bottom of your heart;

don't try to figure out everything on your own.

Listen for God's voice in everything you do, everywhere you go;

he's the one who will keep you on track.

Don't assume that you know it all. (Psalm 3: 6-8 MSG)

Listen

The last four months feel like a science fiction movie and horror movie all in one: pandemics, economic uncertainty, government confusion, isolation, and racial tensions. We all feel the tension, the chaos, and the anxiety. Remember how God brought life from the chaos (Genesis 1). If we listen, listen, listen, between the narrative of headlines, social media, and news, there are stories of faithful lament, unexpected joy, hope renewed, and abundant love.

Listening, is a greatly underrated life and leadership skill. Perhaps one reason for this is that our western culture often privileges the fast-talking, think-on-your-feet mode of being. Listening for genuine connection and understanding; listening that engenders trust and authenticity asks so much of us. It takes energy and intentionality.

"It is often through the quality of our listening and not the wisdom of our words that we are able to effect the most profound changes in the people around us. When we listen, we offer sanctuary for the homeless parts within the other person."

Listen, and then ask honest questions

After we listen, then and only then, comes a question. Somebody once told me that one of the most important traits of a leader is to help a community people ask the right questions about its life and mission. The leaders in Foothills Presbytery are listening. We invite you to listen with us. Listen and be prepared to engage in courageous dialogue with questions about who we are in our life together and how our mission informs who we are as God's called people.

Listen, ask honest questions, and Pray

Pray for healing, restoration, and love.

I offer these words from the PCUSA Confession of 1967:

"With an urgency born of this hope, the church applies itself to present tasks and strives for a better world. It does not identify limited progress with the kingdom of God on earth, nor does it despair in the face of disappointment and defeat. In steadfast hope, the church looks beyond all partial achievement to the final triumph of God."

Grace and peace, in Christ,

