



July 20, 2021

Dear Friends,

This is the 73rd Tuesday Message I've written to you since the pandemic closed our doors in March 2020. My hope has been to help us remain connected with one another through a challenging/frightening/surreal time in the life of our world. For months our doors were closed to in-person events and for months we have embarked on a gradual reopening. Through it all, we have never missed a week of worship, and our ministry and mission have continued.

This will be my last email for a while. I'm on study leave this week, reading and contemplating sermons for the fall. My sabbatical begins on July 25, and I will be away from the church until the day after Labor Day. If you missed my sermon on Sunday, I hope you will watch it on our [YouTube channel](#). It has more details about my sabbatical, but briefly, I plan to follow the advice Jesus gave to his disciples following their first ministry assignment: "Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while." I am in need of time for rest, prayer, solitude, and reflection. However, please be assured that Sudie and Jill will be here to respond to your needs and concerns.

Life in the church really slows during August – most of our committees and boards will not meet – but everything does not grind to a halt. Sunday worship will continue and during August the Westminster Choir will return. *You read that correctly.* After 16 months without our wonderful choir, we will have an abbreviated choir – 20 choir members (all of whom have been fully vaccinated) – in the chancel to sing our hymns. This is another step in our gradual reopening.

Speaking of vaccinations, I'm very happy to report that 100% of our church staff is vaccinated! Our way out of this dreadful pandemic is for everyone to do the responsible thing for themselves and others by getting vaccinated.

While I'm on sabbatical, Sudie will handle most of the preaching duties and some of our members will serve as worship leaders. Here's the preaching schedule:

continued →



July 25	Sudie
August 1	Sudie
August 8	Sudie
August 15	Jill Getty
August 22	Sudie
August 29	Tracy Keenan (New Castle Presbytery's Missional Presbyter)
September 5	Sudie

I will miss you, but I look forward to rest and renewal over the next few weeks and hope that any of you who need the same will find a way to reenergize your batteries. See you in September!

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Greg", written in a cursive style.

Gregory Knox Jones
Senior Pastor/Head of Staff