**Date:** May 22, 2022

**Series**: The Social Body—Gospel Perseverance through In Person Presence

**Big Idea:** Your in-person presence encourages endurance in Christ.

**Scripture:** Hebrews 10:19-25

*19Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, 20by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, 21and since we have a great priest over the house of God, 22let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. 23Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. 24And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, 25not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.*

**Summary:**

The sermon was about the importance of habitually gathering. We are inherently social. God designed us to give and receive love. This is easiest in-person and can be done beautifully within the body of Christ.

While all this might seem largely self-evident, especially after witnessing the ill effects of social isolation during the pandemic, some of the reasons are less self-evident. We see from Hebrews that our need isn’t simply social. It is also to, “stir up one another to love and good works”, for encouragement and to endure.

**Note:**

*Question two will require some type of writing apparatus. Since nearly everyone carries a phone, that is an option which requires no preparation on your part. However, if you desire, you may wish to provide paper and pens.*

**Questions**:

1. Take a moment to think of someone who has stirred you to love and good works.
   1. How did they accomplish this?
   2. How can you accomplish the same for someone else this week?
   3. Let’s move the question out of the academic world. Who are you thinking of and what are you hoping to do?
2. There are many studies that link gratitude to encouragement. Not only for the recipient of the gratitude but, interestingly, for the giver as well. With that in mind…
   1. Who can you thank for their contribution in encouraging you to persevere in Christ?
      1. Take a few minutes and write a thank you note right now.
      2. Many thank you notes are personal and private. However, if you have written one that you would like to share it may very well encourage and inspire others in the group to hear how God has used them in your life.

The questions below are targeted to address obstacles that may impede us from meeting, encouraging one another, and enduring in Christ. It is probable that the questions will touch a nerve. Thus, these questions might be better suited to break out groups, pairs within the small group or simply individual reflection. Depending on the dynamics of your group these questions may be too volatile for the small group setting.

1. Randy opened by referring to Edward Tonick’s “still face study”. The children in this study are clearly not the only ones who have experienced a lack of loving reception from those they sought to engage meaningfully with. Given the size of our church and the wide array of experiences we bring to our community, doubtless many of us have encountered the social equivalent of “still face” within the church: whether it was here at WRCC or elsewhere. If this is the case…
   1. Is now a time that you can forgive them?
   2. Is now a time that you are ready to ask God to heal you?
   3. Is God revealing to you a time that you gave a brother or sister the social equivalent of “still face”? Do you need to ask for forgiveness?