

Dear Friends,

Fall is approaching and we're all wondering how this particular fall season is going to unfold.

Will schools reopen? If so, how will that look? What about international schools in particular? Will travel restrictions be lifted so people can reach destinations for business and ministry? Will companies, restaurants, and gyms get back to normal capacity? What about sporting events? Will ministry engagements happen?

When looking ahead, we often rely on patterns of the past for perspective. Not this year. Nothing has been normal.



Spring is typically the time to go out in the garden and cut away old growth in anticipation of new growth. Depending on where you live, spring gardening begins as early as March and things start to sprout up around May. Ministry is similar – lots of spring plans and as summer approaches conferences, graduations, and special programs bring people together for celebration, collaboration, and restoration.

Ministry this past spring felt like “extreme pruning,” and we all wondered if the plants would recover. Month after month more plans were canceled, and summer was unrecognizable. Yet here we are in September witnessing God’s enduring faithfulness. This image depicts a little of the joy and sorrow we are experiencing. Things are looking quite stark but there is still life! We see new growth in unexpected ways, beautiful yet fragile.

So many unknowns remain for all of us this fall and beyond. But not for God. He knows exactly how things will be. And we know him. As the days, weeks, and months continue, God continues to guide us to explore new ways of sharing his love, equipping his people, and multiplying disciple-makers.

Moving into fall, these verses in Scripture feel especially relevant, providing us with comfort and caution.

**Proverbs 16:9 – “In their hearts humans plan their course, but the Lord establishes their steps.”**

**James 4:15 – “... you ought to say, ‘If it is the Lord’s will, we will live and do this or that.’”**

Our current circumstances remind us again that life is always a faith walk. We are grateful for an ever-faithful God who is not limited by circumstances. Join us in praying for a faith-filled and fruitful fall. Knowing you are behind us in prayer is a real source of strength. Thank you!

Going forward together,

*Sylvia Lambert*

P.S. As a small expression of our appreciation of you, here is a short devotional booklet (written by our retiring mission pastor), **What We Can Learn from Tree Stumps**. It expands on this idea of growth in unexpected places. We hope it encourages you in your own circumstances.

