

PILGRIM HOME CHURCH

FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION:

Questions provided by April Yamasaki

1. An Ipsos poll reports that a majority of Canadians say that physical distancing due to the novel coronavirus pandemic has left them feeling lonely or isolated (<https://www.ipsos.com/en-ca/news-and-polls/Majority-Of-Canadians-Say-Physical-Distancing-Has-Left-Them-Feeling-Lonely-Or-Isolated>). How would you answer the question: Does physical distancing leave you feeling lonely or isolated?
2. How has the novel coronavirus pandemic affected your relationships with family and friends?
3. What challenges do you face in finding and/or maintaining friendships?
4. The sermon draws on Scripture to describe a number of qualities of genuine friendship: appreciation, respect, thinking the best of your friend, risk-taking, mutuality, burden-bearing, a wider network of faith and friendship, forgiveness. What other friendship qualities are important to you, and why?
5. In what ways is God your friend? What helps you strengthen that friendship?

PRAYER:



JANUARY 24, 2021

with April Yamasaki

REAL RELATIONSHIPS

FORGING FRIENDSHIP IN A LONELY WORLD

REAL RELATIONSHIPS SERIES WITH APRIL YAMASAKI

January 24: Forging Friendship in a Lonely World

February 28: Honouring Singleness and Marriage

March 28: Valuing Family

54 percent of Canadians feel lonely or isolated – Ipsos Poll, April 2020

Loneliness, a “growing health epidemic” – Vivek Murthy, former U.S. Surgeon General, 2017

Friendship is unnecessary, like philosophy, like art....It has no survival value; rather it is one of those things that give value to survival. – C.S. Lewis

A POSITIVE VIEW OF FRIENDSHIP

A friend loves at all times. – Proverbs 17:17

I have called you friends. – John 15:15

A MORE CYNICAL VIEW

Everyone is the friend of one who gives gifts. – Proverbs 19:6

The rich have many friends. – Proverbs 14:20

A REALISTIC VIEW

One who has unreliable friends soon comes to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother. – Proverbs 18:24

PHILEMON: A CASE STUDY OF FRIENDSHIP

*1 From Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and from Timothy, our brother.
To Philemon, our dear friend.*

Paul's friendship with Philemon

GENUINE APPRECIATION

4 I always thank my God when I mention you in my prayers.

RESPECT

14 But I did not want to do anything without asking you first so that any good you do for me will be because you want to do it, not because I forced you.

THINKING THE BEST OF ONE ANOTHER

21 I write this letter, knowing that you will do what I ask you and even more.

Paul's friendship with Onesimus

RISK-TAKING

10 I am pleading with you for my child Onesimus, who became my child while I was in prison.

MUTUALITY

11 In the past he was useless to you, but now he has become useful for both you and me.

17 So if you consider me your partner, welcome Onesimus as you would welcome me.

BURDEN-BEARING

18 If he has done anything wrong to you or if he owes you anything, charge that to me. 19 I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand. I will pay it back.

Faith and a network of friends

SOMETIMES FRIENDS FAIL

*Even my close friend, someone I trusted, one who shared my bread, has turned against me.
– Psalm 41:9*

FRIENDS FORGIVE

Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. – Matthew 26:41

Friends can make us feel even more lonely.

GOD IS OUR FRIEND FOREVER

*God has said, "I will never leave you; I will never abandon you." – Hebrews 13:5;
Deuteronomy 31:6*