



Dear Friends,

Since September I have left Facebook and will not be on this month, or perhaps not on next month either. The political ads are everywhere. We mute more commercials at home than we usually mute. We get more political calls and let them ring and ring. We are in a season of deceit and lies like I've not seen to this degree before.

I have very little control over what is being said and done in our country. But I can vote, and I can seek to tune out what I am able to tune out. I will continue to do my work, but I am not following the pictures of my grandsons on Facebook, at least not now. Maybe in another season.

I am completely disconnecting the first week of October: not recording a worship service (we recorded it a week early); not doing our prayer meeting. I have been given an opportunity to refresh, regroup, and reflect. The Presbyterian Church (USA) offers this unplugging time. I will be away from Mary Ann for that week, and the staff too. This gift is called CREDO and I am blessed to have been admitted to the program. In my November letter I'll share my reflections with you regarding those days. They have already sent me the gift of a handmade stole which I will wear and describe on October 4<sup>th</sup>, World Communion Sunday.

In this horrible season in our nation—unchecked Covid-19, over 200,000 deaths, floods, fires, and lies, depression can settle in. I was privileged to review a fine book written by a friend of Westminster By-The-Sea, Dr. Daniel Hale. Dan used to be the Professor of Clinical Psychology at Stetson University. Currently he is the Special Advisor to the President at Johns Hopkins Medical Center, Bayview. In his new book *Depression: Out of the Darkness and into the Light*, he approaches the topic of depression from three points of view: "A Personal Perspective; a Professional Perspective; and a Father's Perspective. He will speak to us about his book and the topic of depression in two special Body, Mind, & Soul Zoom presentations on Tuesday, October 27<sup>th</sup>, one at 10:00 a.m. and an identical one at 7:00 p.m. We will send an invitation to all persons who are interested in joining us, whether they are church members or not. Spread the word. There is no charge and I believe the topic is especially timely. If you would like to order the book and read it before we meet, please do so! Here are the ISBN numbers (Librarian Linda would be proud that I have provided these.) ISBN 9781642375756, or eISBN 9781642374711.

For those who have not been able to see our services, prayer times, or Bible studies, we offered to loan easy to use electronic tablets. Two persons have already agreed to receive them. That is the best way to stay in touch with us these days: through electronic means. I can add things to our services that I cannot do in person; while I am teaching with Zoom I can see all of your faces and offer my lessons as if we were all in the same room. There are some blessings to our time of quarantine. We will keep trying to create blessings during this time of national darkness. Our nation not only needs our prayers, it needs all of us to come to the aid of our country. Please do what your conscience tells you to do.

Yours in Christ,

*Jeff Sumner*