

## *Merry Christmas from the Cox Family!*

“Be still, and know that I am God.” Ps. 46:10 is a common verse, but an uncommon understanding. We often see it as a challenge to quiet our stressed out lives or chaotic circumstances, but the context of this verse is actually set when the nations are warring against each other and against God and His people. God’s words here are one of rebuke, much like you would rebuke your kids if they were loudly quarrelling at your feet. It is God entering into the battle and reminding them of Who is on the throne. This verse actually ends with an explanation mark as He continues, “I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!” Somehow we tend to leave this part off.

Looking back at this past year, one can easily focus on the chaos and tumult in our country and the world. Yet there will indeed be a day when the nations will be stilled before Him and none can deny His power and deity. He will do this with just His speech! And yet it is that same awesome God, the One which will silence nations and bring them to their knees, that we behold when we look into that rustic manger and view the frailty of a newborn infant. In the midst of so much uncertainty, I have to purposely focus on not just the gentle Christ child that has come to take away the sins of the world, but also on the immeasurable power and sovereignty of a Holy and just God who is also our judge! That same tender baby, who grew into our merciful Savior, will return with a sword coming from His mouth and reap judgement on the nations. (Rev. 19:15-21). For me, this reminder creates a great humbling of my heart as I consider the mightiness of a God who died so horrifically for this undeserving sinner. He can wipe out the nations, yet He knows my very thoughts and His own thoughts for me are more than the sands of the sea. (Ps. 139) And this drives home yet another truth. Ps 56:3-4 “Whenever I am afraid, I will trust in You. In God (I will praise His word), In God I have put my trust; I will not fear. What can flesh do to me?”



Many of us feel like things are “off balance” this year as we celebrate this season of Christ’s birth, but may this time of unsettling be one that causes us to look down and make sure that we are standing on the solid ground of God’s Word and not that of the world’s philosophies. We pray that you would be reminded of the deep and powerful love of Christ and may you have a boldness to share that same love with others. May each of us have a joy and peace that surpasses understanding and shines out through us to everyone God brings into our lives.



## Family and Ministry Update:

We have been blessed to get to know our new class of students a little better with each passing month and have been enjoying our two students, Salome from Germany, and Danae from the Lancaster area. We also started our year with Kristin Thompson co-advising with us but she has recently moved back to the New England area. We miss her so much and were blessed by her time with us.

With all the Covid cases going up, students are on an extended break through the holidays and we are connecting with them online via virtual classrooms and facetime. We will miss many of the traditions that we enjoyed with them this time of the year, but now I have an excuse to leave my home decor up well after the holidays!

We enjoyed a wonderful visit with our kids from Texas over the Thanksgiving break. They spent 2 weeks quarantining in order to make the trip and surprised us with the news that another little grandbaby is on the way in May! Hannah and Garrett are very excited about meeting this little guy and the wonderful addition he will make to their family dynamic. There is nothing like having 2 little ones in the house again to remind you how far from the child proofing days your house has become! God blessed us with enough snow during their visit so they could experience sled riding and cross country skiing.

The rest of the family is enjoying a season of slowing down a little bit and regrouping before our busy spring is upon us. We rejoice in God's provision and safety for our family through many different recent circumstances. Megan continues to adjust in her job after her department recently had one of their staff move back home. Lydia has started a new job in town but has run into difficulties with transportation that we are



still working through. Emily and Jonathan are plugging away at school and Jenni is still taking classes with the fire department when possible. Though this Christmas will look so differently than the many before it, we rest in the Sovereignty of our loving Savior.

We cannot look back on this past year without being in awe of God's provision and faithfulness to us and the ministry here. We know it is only by His hand that we have been sustained over the years, and it is Him we seek to glorify. Thank you to everyone who has come alongside us and been a vital part of our support system. We are truly blessed!

In His Service, Matt, Jenni, Megan, Lydia, Emily and Jonathan Cox