



July 24, 2024

A Note from Pastor Jon

Greatest Hists: Revisiting some previous Letters of Encouragement, in celebration of all God has done during these last four years!

Dear Friends,

Just a couple of weeks ago we welcomed our friends from Pakistan back to Hilliard. As a part of their time here they met the children at our Vacation Bible School to tell stories of what it's like to go to school in rural Pakistan and the many challenges that students must overcome. Our students at VBS were learning to listen to stories of others and to advocate for and help others with expressed needs.

The students at VBS heard that every school student in Pakistan must have a uniform as a part of their school supplies. They also heard that there are many impoverished students who cannot afford their uniform, or even a pair of shoes to wear when the temperatures can reach nearly 120 degrees.

When someone asked what it would cost to provide these much-needed supplies for the children in Pakistan, we learned that \$40 will supply everything for a school year for one student, including two pair of shoes.

Our VBS students decided they wanted to assist by raising money through their offerings to purchase shoes, uniforms, and other supplies for the students in Pakistan. They, along with some other generous donors on VBS Sunday, were able to raise enough money to assist 13 students at the school for this coming school year.

We offer this letter to you from March of 2022 when we first met our friends from Pakistan...



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Originally sent March 23, 2022:

As you read this Letter of Encouragement, know that my heart is excited.

I have always loved the opportunity to meet and get to know people from different cultures who grew up speaking a different language, whose life and family is different from mine.



My heart gets excited because I gain an opportunity to make new friends, to widen my community, and also to see that no matter what we look like, sound like, or where we are from, we find the commonality as children of God — a God who loves us NO MATTER WHAT.

I write this letter with the anticipation of my new friends Peter and his daughter Naomi being in Hilliard for a few days.

I look forward to hearing their stories of life in rural Pakistan, and how God has blessed them to be a blessing to so many others.

I am excited to spend time in a car, around a table, in conversations, listening and learning as we journey around Hilliard and the greater Columbus area together.

I am excited to hear how Peter felt led to begin to educate girls in a rural part of Pakistan where education, let alone education of girls, is not taken for granted.

I am excited to hear how Peter felt led to us at HUMC, to begin watching worship via our Facebook livestream on Sunday mornings. I am excited to hear his dreams for the work he and his family are doing in Pakistan. I am excited to hear how we at HUMC can find ways to partner together from halfway around the world.

I am also excited that we get a chance to do some of this together!

I want to invite you to join us in person or online this Sunday morning at 9am or 11am for worship as Peter and Naomi will join us in person. You will have a chance to hear what God has done and is doing in their lives. *(Remember, we're revisiting this Letter of Encouragement; this happened in 2022.)* (<https://hilliardumc.org/worship/>)

I also want to encourage you to come this Sunday night at 6:30pm to Warehouse 839 for a more informal time of conversation and learning. *(Remember, we're revisiting this Letter of Encouragement; this happened in 2022.)*

Friends, I am excited to see some things anew.

I am excited for a chance to gain some new perspectives on education and ministry in a rural and impoverished context.

I am excited that God has brought Peter into our lives as a part of Hilliard United Methodist Church.

I bet if you've read this far that you can't tell I am EXCITED!

Mostly though, again, I am thankful for an opportunity to meet fellow travelers on this journey to love and serve God in the places God has called us. It doesn't matter if that place is Pakistan, Hilliard, Columbus, Ohio, or anywhere else.

I hope you will join my excitement and join me this Sunday as we welcome Peter and Naomi to our community!

(NOTE: This Sunday, July 28, during worship we will actually be celebrating all things Lakeside Institute with our youth, who will just be returning from their week at camp up at Lake Erie!)

Pastor Jon



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