

# A LETTER FROM DR. SEAN LUCAS

July 16, 2020

My dear Friends:

I love the mountains of North Carolina. It was really hard to come back to the heat and humidity of home; we had tremendous weather while we were away. As a result, we ended up hiking a lot more than we normally do, all sorts of hikes—mountain vistas, treeless plateaus, and waterfalls.

I enjoy waterfalls. Sara has a book that shows where all the waterfalls in that part of western North Carolina are—and we've seen a ton of them. This year, we returned to a waterfall that we hadn't seen in many years, High Falls in DuPont State Forest. It isn't a hard hike: in fact, it is too easy because there were a ton of people there. We scrambled over rocks to get close to the waterfall—we could feel the spray coming from the falls and the force of the water pounding on the rocks just in front of us.

While we were sitting there staring at the falls, these verses came to mind over and over: “Deep calls to deep at the roar of your waterfalls; all your breakers and your waves have gone over me. By day the Lord commands his steadfast love, and at night his song is with me” (Psalm 42:7-8). We heard the roar of the falls; we saw the breakers and waves. We imagined the force of those waters—life's own challenges, difficulties, and stresses exacerbated by COVID, political controversy, and questions about the future—rushing over us.

Yet even with the force of those waters, God's waters (your breakers, your waves), he hasn't forsaken us: he commands his covenant loyalty and steadfast love. And when the darkness comes, his song is in our mouths and hearts to comfort us. When we sing as a family, “Abide with me/fast falls the eventide/the darkness deepens/Lord with me abide,” these verses tell us that song is God's song for us, his song for us in our dark nights.

I often wonder when I stare at a waterfall: who gets such enjoyment from the waterfall when no one is around? After all, the water doesn't turn on and off simply because people are there; it continues to run and fall and create beauty and noise. Who enjoys all of that? And the answer always comes back to me: God gets pleasure from the waterfall. And from you and me too.

In the grip of God's grace,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sean". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.