

## Trusting in God – March 23, 2020

Some may question by doing the things we are doing are we truly trusting in God. The biggest question is by not having or going to church are we not saying we don't trust? I beg to differ, and I want to use our United Methodist Book of Discipline to help me with my three points.

As United Methodist, we hold to Three General Rules for our church and our lives. **The first is to do no harm.** Perhaps that is why we are on the frontlines of those churches fully cooperating with all recommendations before they become orders to protect ourselves and our community. Again, some may think this is all an overreaction. If this is you I ask, but what if you're wrong? We do not want to over-reach or build hysteria. That also causes harm. And, yes, businesses, especially small businesses, are suffering. Still, our first line in 'do no harm' must be to the public health for the good of our world and our community.

**The second General Rule is to do all the good we can, wherever we can, whenever we can, for as long as we can.** As a community of faith we will protect the most vulnerable among us. We will share with one another as we can. Where possible, support local small businesses. We will refrain from panic purchasing that depletes goods needed by all. Those of us who are able, will assist those who are not. If you know of church members or other folks who are your neighbors who are high risk and may face even greater restrictions than some of us, offer to pick up items for them when you do go to the store. Email and snail mail words of encouragement to one another. More important to our human connection, may phone calls to family, church members (maybe even folks you don't know well), other friends and neighbors to offer a listening ear and words of encouragement. Be attentive to the needs of those around you. Offer to help those who haven't used social media so that they can be better connected to all of us.

**The third rule is to attend upon the ordinances of God, or put another way, to stay in love with God.** This means that we are a people of prayer, worship, bible reading and study. We look at a variety of spiritual disciplines to keep ourselves aware to our connection to the divine and one another. I am trying my best to make sure that I don't overlook anyone during this time. So as you are connecting with one another ask if they have heard from the pastor. If they have not then I don't have the correct contact information. **Please get that to me.** I'm also looking at means for connecting us for study and to encourage new, creative spiritual disciplines. Remember that we are not restricted from taking walks outside, enjoying the fresh air and sunshine. This, too, is a form of spiritual discipline.

Watch for more ways to connect from me through email, and Facebook. I would also welcome any comments or suggestions to expand our connection and ways to connect with those among us who do not have the capacity for all the internet avenues. You also help me to remember that we remain a community connected through our love of God and one another. And remember that I am praying for each of you daily by name for the peace of Jesus Christ that passes all understanding. We remain a strong community in love with God, loving one another, loving our neighbor, loving the stranger, and yes, even loving our enemies. Look for the blessings to be found in each day, even now, especially now.

Remember you are blessed, so you may be a blessing. Peace be with you,

**Pastor Orr**