



Russell Silverton Wider Parish

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ROJ IWO



Greetings in Christ,

Near the end of July I found myself excited as businesses, provincial borders and community groups began to re-open. I began to reengage life and resumed doing some of the activities that will always bring joy to my soul. I took some day trips to different areas, I visited with friends and shared common activities, and I socialized in public settings. I was enjoying the journey back to normal, or the journey to the new normal. I was especially looking forward to being able to worship with others in the same physical space. The Covid-19 fog was lifting and real hope was beginning to shine through. And then, there was a spike in cases and the province rolled back its reopening plan for this region. I felt like I had been running a 5k relay and as I approached the finish line, the announcer said that the relay was changed to 10k and I was only half done. It was like a kick in the head, I wanted to scream. I wanted to scream at the announcer, I wanted to scream at anyone and everyone. I wanted to stop and give up. I felt betrayed. I was angry and frustrated. I was fearful and anxious for the future. I feared for others. A sense of hopelessness began to replace the hope that had been growing. I was experiencing COVID Fatigue.

We are all struggling with the reality of Covid-19, and while each one of us will experience it in our own unique way, I suspect that many of you have experienced similar anxieties, frustrations, and emotions. These feelings are normal, there is no shame in having them. When we deny our emotions and our feeling, we allow them the possibility of having control over us. That is when we may say or do things that we later regret. And we all do this, because we are all human. When we name these feelings we begin to take control from them. So acknowledge your feelings but do not allow them to steal your hope and lead you to despair.

Remember that we are not alone. Remember the story of Jesus and the storm. Jesus was sleeping when a storm suddenly threatened the boat he was on. The disciples were scared and afraid. They woke Jesus in a panic. His first words to them were, "Peace, be still". Then he reminded them to have faith and he calmed the storm. He reminded them that working together they could get through the storm, safely to the other side. These words, this reminder, was part of what I needed to calm my anxieties and restore my hope.

We need to have faith in our ability to weather the storm of Covid-19. Working together we have the tools to get through this storm. We have: the wisdom, the skills, the ingenuity, the resources, the resilience, the perseverance, the determination, and the courage. And most importantly, we do not journey alone, the spirit journeys with us guiding us and encouraging us. I have faith that one day we will be able to once again greet one another with handshakes and with hugs. Until that time, be kind with yourselves and be kind to one another. Be quick to forgive and slow to judge. Put aside some time every day to do something that will bring your spirit joy. If you are struggling, reach out to someone. Remember, we are all in this boat together, if we all pull together and give each other the support we need, the storm will end and a new day will dawn.

If you are struggling and need someone to listen, or if you are not struggling but would simply like to visit, please call my cell, 204-821-5442. I am happy to visit at the office or to arrange outdoor visits on patios and decks and in back yards, etc.

I look forward to the time when we can once again worship together in the same space. Until that time, may the spirit of Christ surround you and fill your heart with peace, joy, hope and love.

Blessings, Rev. David

Weekly Worship On Zoom 10am Sunday morning.

Meeting ID: 480 466 178

Passcode: 671470

If you have never used Zoom before the App can be downloaded for free on any Apple, Android or Windows device. If you need help getting Zoom set up on your device feel free to give me a call. 204-821-5442.

You may also choose to call in:

(Long distance charges will apply. If you have a long distance plan there will be no additional charges.)

Simply dial **1 647 374 4685** from any phone

When asked to enter a meeting ID enter 480 466 178 #

When asked to enter the passcode enter 671470 #

When asked to enter your participant ID, press # or simply wait

Fall Programming:

This fall I will be starting two new Zoom study groups, a Bible study and a Conversation Circle. Look for more information on these groups near the end of September.