

Philippians 4:13 "I can do ALL things through Christ who strengthens me"

June of 2020, this is another month that will be remembered by many people for generations to come. Indeed, June 2020 is one of those months of the COVID-19 pandemic that reminds us of how things used to be. Another reminder of how things were before COVID-19.

I know that it seems like a dream for many of us, thinking about what has happened has also allowed us the opportunity to reflect about our lives and how to live from now on.

Many people feel that this experience has afforded them an opportunity to re-examine their lives, their way of being on this earth; not only here in the USA but all over the world. It is also true that for millions of people around the world, this Pandemic seems as just another drop in the bucket of misfortunes that they are experiencing. People who are living in refugee camps, people who live in the midst of war, people who live without the basic necessities of life. For many, this pandemic is what they have lived for years, with no relief coming to them. Millions of people die of hunger every year, millions die due to lack of health care, while millions die because they have to work under the most challenging of circumstances (mining without adequate protections, sexual exploitation, slave conditions of different types, etc.).

However, all the things we see in the world remind us that there are many things that we can do to make a difference in the world because we are called by God to be stewards of life. We can make a difference in the middle of the pandemic because we know that God wants the best for all of God's creation: human and non-humans alike. In one of John Wesley's sermons titled: *The Good Steward*, Wesley said: "God has entrusted his creation to us because He loves us. Let us, therefore, be good stewards of his creation because we love Him."

Indeed, stewardship, like everything else in Christian teaching, comes from love. First of all, it is God's love for us, and then we have been entrusted with the world in which we live. Second, our response to God's love must be our love for God's creation: humans and non-human beings.

In Wesley's Explanatory Notes, he makes a poignant and harrowing remark regarding Luke 16:12.

The context of the passage is right after Jesus tells the parable of the Unjust Steward, and proclaims a few profound maxims including the following: "And if you have not been faithful with what belongs to another, who will give you what is your own?" (Luke 16:12, NRSV). Jesus' contention is with the unjust steward acting recklessly with things that are not even his.

If someone is so wasteful and dishonest with what he does not even own, how much more dishonest and wasteful will he be with what he does actually possess? Thus Wesley about our responsibility as God's stewards:

None of these temporal things are yours: you are only stewards of them, not proprietors: God is the proprietor of all; he lodges them in your hands for a season: but still they are his property. Rich men, understand and consider this. If your steward uses any part of your estate (so called in the language

of men) any farther or any otherwise than you direct, he is a knave [dishonest]: he has neither conscience nor honour. Neither have you either one or the other, if you use any part of that estate, which is in truth God's, not yours, any otherwise than he directs.

So, even in this surprising time we find ourselves having to be reminded, again, that everything belongs to God: our lives, our church, our resources, our religious affiliations, our governments (local and national), everything we have, or direct, or control is under the power and judgment of God and must render its accountability to God (Matthew 25:31-41; Romans 13:3-4a). Caring for creation, and, therefore, for the people who live in this earth, our brothers and sisters, our fellow human beings is not only important, but rather, essential to who we are as people of God. For those of us who are part of the household of God (and I pray all of you reading this are), COVID-19, and all the other challenges the world lives -in is part of our responsibility to make it better.

Wesley's point should not be missed. When he refers to "these temporal things" in his sermon, he is referring to everything in this present age, all of God's creation, before the new heavens and new earth. This world in which we live and everything within-it is, as it were, God's estate, and therefore, we are, unequivocally, not proprietors of the estate but stewards—merely stewards.



At the end of our lease, either in our death or when Christ comes back, we will all have to give an account. Those who exploit the "estate" because of greed, neglect the "estate" because of apathy, or abuse the "estate" because of pride have neither, as Wesley puts it, "conscience nor honour."

This is not a Pollyannaish mind-set, this is not a politically correct discourse, this is not about partisan politics, this is not even about being liberal or conservatives, this only has to do with our call as stewards of God's creation to take care of the world; of its governance, of its commerce, of its health care, of its education, etc. As people of God, as the royal priesthood of God, we are called to make a difference in the world. If you have been anointed with God's Spirit (which, if you are a Christian, you have been) then your responsibility for God's creation – human and non-human—is not something any one of us can abrogate.

As the scripture says:

Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. ***I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.***

And

...my God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:12-13 and 19)

Your brother in Christ,



Pastor Eliezer



Please PRAY for those affected by COVID-19



a letter from our STEWARDSHIP & FINANCE TEAM

The Stewardship & Finance Team would like to **send our thanks to everyone that continues to give generously to the church through online or mail-in offerings.** Because of the PPP Grant we received from the Federal government and your generosity, we have been able to continue paying our staff and expenses. We have fully paid our apportionment through May. This is a huge blessing in these unprecedented times made possible by your financial gifts to this church. While we are not physically present together, your support enables ministry to continue in this community and world. **Thank You!**

The Stewardship & Finance team has begun to plan for the additional costs that reopening and restarting face to face worship may include. Members have attended webinars from the conference and reviewed guidelines on reopening for worship. *We are encouraging ministry teams to re-evaluate their budgets to determine what new mission opportunities may be available with our changing world.* We continue to meet monthly through virtual meetings to monitor the church's finances to ensure we are being good stewards. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the chairperson of the team, Michele Pickens at spic192459@aol.com.

Chancel Choir Update

- ♪ The Chancel Choir has met on Wednesday evenings, one way or another, since March 25. The first 7 weeks we used ZOOM and most nights we were just catching up socially, although we did experiment with singing a little during a couple of meetings.
- ♪ The past two weeks we have met outside in the church parking lot using masks, 6 foot distances between chairs and lots of hand sanitizer etc. *We have been preparing to be part of a virtual choir that we and the Youth Choir are doing together.* How the choir proceeds in the future depends on the rules coming from the BW Conference and our local government.
- ♪ During this time we have also **welcomed Trinity's new accompanist, Tamara Cashour.** She has been a real trooper since starting at the beginning of April while she was still living in NY City. She met with us via ZOOM every Wednesday, recorded practice tracks and emailed them down for us to rehearse to, and actually played parts and full accompaniments during our ZOOM meetings! She recently moved to Frederick, and you may already have heard her playing and singing during our recorded Sunday worship services. She's a blessing to us all.



Don't forget to stop by our website www.trinitfredrick.org for additional updates, resources and links to sign up for our online worship!

Check the back of this newsletter for worship and Bible study days and times.

We hope to see you online!

TRINITY PASTORAL COUNSELING CENTER



During these unusual times, TPCC has continued to see current clients, the return of former clients, and has accepted new clients.

We provide service by telehealth methods. Some clients prefer to keep their appointments by phone calls. Others have been open to

tele-behavioral health on a HIPAA compliant and HITECH level of security approved platform. *It's a brave new world.*

We continue to thank the church for the love, prayers, and financial support we have experienced during this time. Our clients mirror the larger population as people trying to adapt to the stresses of work and family/educating children at home, grief without the usual social supports and rituals, job loss and next steps, increased levels of anxiety and depression, and more.

Blessings, Diane Younkens, LCPC, NCC, Director and Pastoral Counselor

From Pastor John with Peace and Love

~ Voice of the day ~

Sometimes the most important thing in a whole day is the rest we take between two deep breaths, or the turning inwards in prayer for five short minutes.

~ Prayer of the day ~

Loving God, we call upon you as we rest our souls.
Allow us to breathe as we are embraced
by your gentle love.



By Curtis Osborne

The children's ministry has been hard at work trying to find ways to engage with the children and families in the program. We have encountered a few obstacles but that has not deterred us from continuing to find ways to not only connect and stay engaged with the kids during this time, but to also grow the program once we are fully open, whenever that takes place. So, a lot of planning is going into this. We are also being forced to rethink the whole ministry considering the covid-19 challenges. We are currently reviewing some of the recommendations

given on reopening the church and thoughts to consider for the children's ministry.

These are some of the projects that we are working on:

- We have been discussing and exploring our vacation bible school options, but with using state guidelines and restrictions, we believe that it is best to cancel vbs for this summer and look forward to running it the summer of 2021. The health and safety of the kids is our priority.
- We are looking into our options for the nursery upon reopening. Based on state guidelines and the recommendations of the conference, we will probably not reopen the nursery until further notice. Since young children pass germs from one to another easily, it is best to not reopen the nursery for a while. We have babies and young children who we must consider.
- Another recommendation was to suspend Sunday School and Grow Time until it is recommended to reopen. The children will sit with their parents during service and listen to the Pastor's sermons. We had been moving towards a Family Service type of model for a while and have tried it before. We will supply the kids with lessons and puzzles and discussion points to have with their parents when they get home.
- We plan to use Douglas Talks videos, which is a Christian video series for kids with various topics related to the bible. The video will be sent as a separate link in the email to the kids. We will also start posting videos and lessons on the TUMC website and on our Facebook page. We will use other appropriate Christian videos as well.
- Plans are in the works to have an adult teacher shoot a homemade video with their cell phone talking directly to the kids. Some will be generic and discuss their feelings, some will offer encouragement and others will discuss bible stories.
- Will be discussing adding a Children's Ministry Moment to the online services with Pastor Eliezer.

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Worship
with us
from
HOME

Sunday

Worship Service

Via YouTube

Grow Time I

Via Zoom 10:00am

Grow Time II

Via Zoom 11:00am

Tuesday

Men's Bible Study

Via Zoom 8:30am

Wednesday

Women's Bible Study

Via Zoom 9:30am & 7:00pm