

April 30, 2024

Devotion:

Lately, I have been bothered by things happening in the world...a man who caught himself on fire in protest, college students protesting to the point of being arrested, shootings on a regular basis, and other violent acts. Then, our weather in Iowa, ugh! There has been tornado damage and a predicted hot and muggy summer.

Unfortunately, life can be unpredictable. Many in our congregation and community are experiencing health issues, addiction troubles, family problems, and much more. Yet, despite our issues, most of us leave our homes and spend time with others as if nothing is wrong. When we are asked "How are you today?", our response is "fine" or "good." We know/think that if we shared our troubles with others there would be problems in that as well. We are afraid that people wouldn't know what to say or maybe even would want to avoid us or think there is something wrong with us. So, what do we do? How do we cope with the things in our lives and the world?

This is what I do/have been doing. I watch Star Trek and Syfy and sew. Well, I really do, it is good to have things to distract us. Most powerfully though I pray, talk to God, and read scripture. Scriptures like...*do not fear, for I am with you, do not be afraid, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my victorious right hand.* (Isaiah 41:10) Also, *Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good, love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.* (Romans 12:9-13) And, there are so many others to lift our spirits, strengthen our resolve, and deepen our relationship with the divine.

Having said these things I don't mean to say that there are not really good things happening in life, there are. To be honest though, there will always be things that challenge us and push at our faith. When they do remember prayer, talking with God, and our beautiful scripture.

May your week go well and be filled with love!!

Blessings,

Cindy