

Subject: A Vision of Worship to guide us through Covid-19

Effective Thursday, August 6th, we stopped in person gatherings for Worship, Discipleship, and Business. You are receiving this email and PDF attachment to help you see the Way in which I am offering leadership during this time of chaos.

The attached PDF, **Worship at Home**, is a weekly publication of Trinity United Methodist Church. It serves as one of several ways to connect people to God. Hard copies are delivered by mail and/or volunteers each week. You may find back issues on Trinity's website. Your pastor continues to post weekly sermons on his Facebook Page and Trinity's website. Virtual Bible and Discipleship classes are offered on Zoom. Devotions are sent via Dial My Calls most Mondays, Wednesday's, and Fridays. Martha Spurlock connects the congregation to one another and the community through a emailed prayer list.

John Wesley offers Three Simple Rules:

1. Do no Harm.
2. Do Good.
3. Stay in Love with God.

I hear Jesus teaching us that when our thoughts, words, and actions do harm we Curse our neighbor, self, and community.

I hear Jesus teach the Good we are to do is to bless those who curse us.

I hear Jesus teach that the Holy Spirit opens our eyes to see suffering and death as opportunities to stay in Love with God.

The Attached PDF is the culmination of my longing to worship in Spirit and Truth. This Vision of Worship rose up out of prayer, Bible study, meditation, and many months of "spiritual discontent". (George Barna) Once a Vision is cast it belongs to the people who receive it, nurture it, and pass it to their neighbors.

The last time we closed public gatherings you proved how much you value Trinity's rich traditions. Your tithes reveal that the Physical Nature of Trinity's Worship and Ministry are treasures in your heart. I encourage you to continue to fund the treasure of your heart. Remember, we installed a secure drop box on the alley side of the Church Building. We check the mail several times a week. Many chose to have their bank send the church funds weekly, monthly, or quarterly.

I learned a few things from our last closure. I experienced it as Fasting. Fasting is a spiritual practice that reveals our attachment to physical things. It creates an awareness of how the absence of physical things can and do create suffering. Spirit led Fasting lets us see how we create suffering and participate in evil. With our eyes opened the Holy Spirit leads us to let suffering and evil be. Only then do we experience God with us in our suffering healing the affections created by evil.

I too have opinions about closing public gathering for Worship, Discipleship, and Business. I shall continue to share my opinions with those who ask. My hope is that our opinions lead us to bless one another, not curse or resort to evil filled with anger, wrath, malice, gossip, name calling and defending our self imposed Labels!

I am blessed by the opportunity to be your pastor. You bless me by being patient with my "earthly nature"!

One in Christ,

Robert