

“Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord. He is like a tree planted by water that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit.” Jer. 17:7-8

God’s word is applicable in all seasons and for every circumstance. As you know we had embarked upon a Lenten Series, based upon the colors of the rainbow, entitled, “Recalling God’s Promises.” Today we were to hear about green as a reminder of God’s promise to bring growth for His faithful people. But clearly today there are many who are having difficulty recalling God’s promises at all as they seek to make sense out of the events of the past few weeks and the extreme measures that are being suggested and in some cases mandated by local officials in order to stem the spread of the COVID 19 virus.

“After all,” they reason, “this virus has little to do with me. I’m not in a part of the vulnerable group why should my life change so radically?” Further there are some who were scheduled for life events in the coming weeks, seniors in High School or College, 8th graders or PK students and their families at Grace who while still able to graduate or matriculate will now not likely be able to participate in proms, graduations, school dances, etc. For them and those of us who love them, it is heartbreaking.

And what of the “vulnerable” in our Grace community and the community at large, our neighbors whom we are to love? Do we not as Christians have an obligation to them that if there were a way to prevent this virus from reaching their doors, we would do it? It seems to me that the Lord God Almighty is giving to us a great opportunity to do just this. He has taken what is bad and is using it for good that His Holy Church might shine the light of the crucified and risen Lord Jesus upon those in need.

According to our Small Catechism, based upon the of Word’s the Apostle Paul, Civil authorities are in place to assist us in our love for neighbor. We are duty bound to follow their laws and guidance in times such as these so long as they do not contradict God’s word. Accordingly, we will be cancelling all events held at Grace through March 31. I and vicar will put out daily or near daily devotional readings. We will have video recorded devotional services beginning this weekend and are currently working on a plan to bring in groups of 10 people for Divine Services with Holy Communion beginning April 1, if necessary and assuming that a shelter in place order has not been issued. Please look for the first of those devotions later today. For now, be at peace and know that you are in God’s hands, continue to trust in Him for He is faithful and He will keep His promise to bless you.

Your Servant in Christ,

Pastor Loughran