

Aug. 5 Trinity Times: Pastor's Ponderings *What do you say when...?*

What do you say these days when someone asks, 'How are you doing?'

In the pre-pandemic era, it was a no-brainer just to say, 'I'm good. How are you?' That question was a social ritual that we used to get the conversation started. Most people just rolled right past it, assuming all was well with them and the other person. But not anymore.

After four, almost five months of pandemic living, the question, 'How are you doing?' begs for a little more attention. Because we are all doing life in a whole new, and less comfortable, way right now.

And all of us are missing activities that we've 'always done.' We're just not having as much fun as we used to.

And many of us are hug-hungry for physical contact—even something as simple as a hand shake or a pat on the shoulder has become dangerous. Lots of people are missing that.

And all of us are living in dread of 'the COVID 19 data' and the possibility of more deaths and more tightening up and closing stuff down---AGAIN!

When that word came out of the Governor's office in Lansing this past week, 'How are you doing' became a loaded question.

If asked, the answers would vary from person to person: Anger for some. Frustration for others.

Resentment at the government...

More sadness on top of sadness about not getting to do what we want.

Resignation maybe, but not in a good way.

Fear that maybe this virus thing is NEVER going to end.

What do you say when you don't get to do what you want? See who you want to see? Go where you want to go? How are you doing with all of that?

That's a tough question to answer but there were some words of comfort and wisdom passed along to us at the Michigan UMC Annual Conference this week. Yes, it was a ZOOM experience. Just a pale shadow of our former gatherings with a couple thousand people, live worship, excellent preachers, beautiful rituals and warm fellowship.

But there were words, moments of clarity during the abbreviated Conference that can help us figure out what to say when someone asks, 'How are you doing?' Try saying some of these things:

'I'm doing better now that you asked me.'

'I'm defending hope because God loves us.'

'I'm learning how to live with less, knowing that Jesus has already given us enough.'

'I'm not *living the dream*...I'm *hanging onto the dream* of those who came before us.'

'I remember every day, that Jesus is all we need. Especially when it feels like Jesus is all we've got. And that's enough.'

May the power of the Holy Spirit be visible, be present, be a beautiful light, even in your darkest moments. God's peace to us all. *Pastor Geri*

The Church Council at Trinity has decided to continue Worship in the Sanctuary during this time, with the appropriate safety measures in place. Other options for Praising God:

- **10:30 Sunday Facebook Live Worship**
- **906/214-4544 24/7 Telephone Access to Sermon and Scripture**