



# STAYING STRONG

JESUS CHRIST IS THE BIG "C" IN OUR LIFE – relegate cancer to be the "little c"

January 2023

## CELEBRATE THE LOVE THAT JESUS HAS FOR US

This Month's Topics:

"SED Devotion"

"Six Little Stories"

Inspiring Quote

Self-Care Corner

Laughter is the Best Medicine

The Importance of Staying Connected

Inspirational Bible Verse:

"The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end, they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness."

Lamentations 3: 22-23

### THOUGHTS ON LOVE

Of all the emotions we experience during our brief stay on this planet,  
the most complicated and compelling is the strange mystery we call love.

For Paul, love is at its best when it turns us inside out.

Focused more on meeting others needs

instead of satisfying our own.

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Such love challenges our natural instincts  
To only give in proportion to what we get.  
There is vulnerability in living this way,  
And we hesitate to expose our heart.

The gospel coaxes us to boldly risk anyway.

Because faith hope and love  
are inextricably linked.  
One dependent upon another.

It is our faith in the exorbitant love  
God provided through the cross  
that provides courage and hope necessary  
to mirror God's extravagant grace.

A Devotion by Rev. Donald Schaefer

Northern Region Facilitator for Mission Engagement

Southeastern District, LCMS

## SIX LITTLE STORIES

There was a time when all the villagers decided to pray for rain. On the day of prayer, all the people gathered but only one little boy came with an umbrella. That is faith.

When you throw babies in the air, they laugh because they know you will catch them. That is trust.

Every night we go to bed without any assurance of being alive the next morning, but still we set the alarms to wake us. That is hope.

We plan big things for tomorrow in spite of zero knowledge of the future. That is confidence.

We see the world suffering, but still, we get married and have children. That is love.

On an old man's shirt was written "I am not 80 years old; I am sweet 16 with 64 years of experience. That is attitude.

Have a happy day and live your life like these six stories. Remember: good friends are the rare jewels of life; difficult to find and impossible to replace!

## INSPIRING QUOTE

“God loves each of us as if there were only one of us.”

Saint Augustine



## SELF-CARE CORNER

The goal of self-care is reducing stress and feeling recharged. You have to make that a priority so that you can be your best self. When you take care of yourself, you are more prepared to help others in your life and find joy doing it. St. Paul gives a great formula for reducing stress and recharging in Philippians 4:6-7. He writes: “Do not be anxious about anything but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

### Set a Positive Morning Intention

*Would you like to start your days with more energy and purpose?* Try setting the tone with a positive intention.

It's a phrase you repeat to yourself first thing in the morning. You can use the same one each day – or change it up.

It can be anything that matters to you. Close our eyes, breathe deeply and repeat a phrase like:

- ★ I am ready for today's challenges.
- ★ I am a good person, and I see the good in others.
- ★ My worries do not control me.
- ★ I am grateful for this beautiful day.

Always remember:

Self-care is not selfish. You cannot serve from an empty vessel.

Finding and affirming your true value, worth and wealth is a matter of self-care, compassion, lovingkindness and true generosity.

“To love oneself is the beginning of a lifelong romance.”

Oscar Wilde

## LAUGHTER IS THE BEST MEDICINE

When is a black dog not a black dog?.

When it is a greyhound!

Since March of 2020, we have experienced more time alone than ever thought possible. And we have survived. We have adjusted the way we do a lot of things and our social time with friends and family has radically changed – from being near social butterflies to becoming absolute hermits. Have you become friends with yourself yet? Have you discovered the “real you”? How do you like it?

Note on Mindfulness: Many of you may be thinking the term “mindfulness” is New Age. You might even be aware of seeing this term more frequently these days. However, giant corporations like Aetna Insurance and Google, among many, have major workplace programs for their employees to help them deal with the many possible stressors of modern life. We as Christians can still practice mindfulness through our focus on God and his son, Jesus Christ.

**EVERYONE:** Many of you have concerns on a variety of matters. **Please feel free to contact us for prayer, help with questions, or just to say hello.** We are to stay strong and don't lose hope! There will be a time of reconnections with hugs all around!.

**Call Sheryl: 336-577-1935**



## **THE IMPORTANCE OF STAYING CONNECTED**

Isolation and loneliness are not just sad situations. They have been shown to increase the likelihood of dementia, depression, and heart disease in older adults. Even early death. Below are some ideas to boost connection. Some require technology. Others do not.

- **Video Calls.**
- **Old-fashioned snail mail.**
- **Telephone calls with an activity.**
- **Explore reminiscence activities.**
- **Consider a telephone check-in service.**
- **While at home, communicate with neighbors, friends and relatives. Don't wait for calls to come to you, pick up that phone and call someone! Our phones will become one of our best friends!**

**OUR HEAVENLY FATHER *WILL* BRING US THROUGH THIS TRIAL!!!**