

*“We worship together, grow in faith, share our faith
and serve with the love of God”
(St. James’ Mission Statement)*

Beloved

Such a strange time. Never have we seen such a day. Quarantine. Masks. Numbers, numbers of infected and dead. Numbers of unemployed. Lives changed. Outlooks changed. Plans changed. Daily life - changed.

No matter where it came from, how it’s been handled or is being handled, no matter if it’s natural or created; Covid19 has changed our world, our lives. What can we do?

St. James’ Mission Statement states we worship together. Don’t we wish. We went two months without gathering, thanks to modern technology we worshipped from home. We stayed in touch. We encouraged one another. We vented. We cried. We shared our fears. Now we are open and some have returned to in-person worship, some continue to worship from home. During this time, we turn to God, we pray, we question, we wonder, we look to the future, we – grow in faith.

But how can we be in mission and serve others at this time. I’ve pondered this, over and over during these uncertain times. In Deuteronomy we are told, “If among you, one of your brothers should become poor, in any of your towns within your land the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart or shut your hand against your poor brother.” (Deut 15:7) Many have become poor this year, due to no action of their own. Businesses have closed. People have been laid off. Some receive Workman’s Comp, some work from home, some took a pay-cut, some will return to work, some will have to look for a new job. People have less to spend, people have become poor. Later we read, “For there will never cease to be poor in the land. Therefore, I command you, ‘You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor, in your land.’” (Deut 15:11)

Christ followers share their faith through words and works. St. James does not have a food pantry. We do not have a store room of clothing, household good to meet daily needs. But we do, as a church and as individuals, support Project Hope, which DOES. Many of us volunteer at Project Hope. This is one way we, “Serve with the Love of God.”

During these uncertain times the number of people who are in need has increased. In their generosity, with faith in God’s faithfulness to provide, each box of food holds more than usual, for the need is more than usual.

To live out our mission statement, we listen to the words of James, who tells us our gifts are given to show our faith. “What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? ... If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace, be warmed and filled,’ without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? So also, faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. But someone will say, ‘You have faith and I have works.’ Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.” (James 2:14-18)

I bid you peace

Pastor Tonia