

Reflection: Responding Well in Crisis

O God, have mercy on me, for people are hounding me. My foes attack me all day long. ² I am constantly hounded by those who slander me, and many are boldly attacking me. ³ But when I am afraid, I will put my trust in you. ⁴ I praise God for what he has promised. I trust in God, so why should I be afraid? What can mere mortals do to me? — Psalm 56:1-4

Conflict, change and upheaval are unsettling at best ... violent and destructive at worst. Yet disruptions have the potential to lead us into what Peter Scazzero calls “intense spiritual encounters”, both with God and others. Uncertainty, loss of control and a deep sense of *disorientation* is an opportunity for *re-orientation* about life, ministry, our priorities, and how we will live out our faith in the face of difficulty. This is as true for us now as it was for King David who had enemies on every side.

Our community and those within your personal sphere of influence need to hear a voice of reason in the midst of fear, confusion and disorientation concerning COVID-19... and *you* are that voice. One that is both *realistic* and filled with *hope*. On one hand, we need to be realistic by being honest. We didn't ask for this. The coronavirus has been thrust upon us. We can't motivate our way of it. And as far as anyone can tell, it is not going away any time soon.

On the other hand, because we are people of faith, we put our trust in the Lord in the face of fear... our own fear and that of others. David said, “*when I fear, I will trust*” ... The greatness of David's leadership was that he not only admitted the reality of fear and uncertainty operating in his own life, he used them as the catalysts for his trust in God.

We know we cannot motivate ourselves out of this epidemic with idealistic blather such as “don't worry be happy, everything is going to be alright”. While things will be alright *in the end*... sickness, death and confusion are very real *right now*. That said, we have a God whose help should not be ignored, trivialized or taken for granted. Confusion and disruptions are opportunities for deeper trust in God and responsible action toward our neighbour.

So what *can* we do? How can we lead well right where we are?

Here are some proactive decisions your leaders have decided to pursue.

- **Pray and meditate.** As a team, we recognize the source of our peace, protection and hope. Join us as we pray daily to hear the voice of Christ, to act upon His word and seek to live lives of sacrifice.
- As a team we have decided to **act first and fast** even if we might be wrong, rather than being last to respond at the risk of being right. That said, for the foreseeable future, EKLP is restructuring how and where we meet.
- As a team we decided that although we **will not meet** for regular Sunday morning services starting March 22nd and beyond, we are working to provide on-line and off-line opportunities to connect with Jesus and each other. So, stay tuned.
- We are also working on a resource for **on-line giving** that is safe and provides a private space for personal worship as you make your monetary offerings to God.

Here are some things you can do to make sure you're not left behind.

- **Pray and meditate.** Start every day with some time to reflect, pray and even meditate on scripture and surrender the problems you have to God.
- **Get some sleep.** If you are tired you're going to be ineffective. Your body and brain need rest.
- **Get some exercise.** Even a 20 minute run or a brisk walk will help.
- **Eat better.** Yep, this is sounding a lot like what you already know. But just do it.
- **Call a friend you can talk to.** In a crisis, you need people who don't need anything from you. Call a friend.
- **Spend at least some time with your family.** They need your love and friendship too, as much as your church family does, if not more.

We are here for you!

Hungry for Life!

Pastor Doug and EKLP Council