



PARADE STREET UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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James A. Cannistraci, Pastor

PASTOR JIM'S THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS - JANUARY 2017

Dear Friends,

I've been thinking about my Mom a lot on these cold, winter days. Each winter, Mom suffers terribly with cracked and bleeding skin on her fingers and thumbs. The past few years I've developed the same condition. My index finger and thumb on my right hand crack and bleed when the weather is extremely cold. They often hurt when I use them. (I tell my Mom this is a hereditary condition and she passed this problem on to me. So it's her fault my fingers hurt. Of course, I tell her the same thing about any problem I have! Am I the only one who sometimes blames problems on other people? By the way Mom just laughs and rolls her eyes! When I blame her!)

These past few weeks, I've been seeing a connection between how I care for my hands, the painful, cracked skin on my finger and thumb, and other painful situations in my life. I'm sure some of you are wondering if this is a public service announcement to protect your hands and fingers during the cold winter season. IT'S NOT, so please keep reading!!!)

Mom tells me to use hand lotion every time after I wash my hands, and to be sure to wear my gloves when I go outside during cold and snowy weather. She tells me to regularly take care of my hands, and then I'll have fewer problems... like cracked and bleeding skin... and then my hands won't hurt as much!!!

(Interestingly this winter I've been more intentional about using hand lotion and wearing my gloves...and guess what... MOM IS CORRECT!!!)

Friends, maybe my Mom's advice on caring for my hands is similar to God's advice on how He wants us to care for our lives. God reminds us that if we spend time each day, reading a few words from the Bible, and sitting quietly with Him in prayer, then the difficult times won't come quite so often, and when they do, they won't be so severe. God wants us to realize that in spite of the many wonderful blessings He's shared with us, we will always encounter difficult situations. There will always be times when issues confront us, or people connect with us...in ways that chill us to the bone. There will be times when we feel like we're bleeding emotionally, and it feels painful to take another risk to connect with people, and we don't have enough physical energy to even move. The truth is, God wants each of us to be filled with joy, have relationships filled with meaning, and see the purpose He has for our lives. He wants us to use our lives to care for others, and assures us that His word, His forgiveness, and His promise of eternal life is the lotion that will sooth the painful fears and uncertainties of our lives.

Each day we go out into the cold and snowy experience of life, we need to wear the protection of His Love!
Hope to see you in Church!



Blessings, Pastor Jim

Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.

The people of the United Methodist Church