

Joyful in Hope – Day Twelve, March 31, 2020
(thoughts and ideas to encourage and challenge)

“Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.”
Romans 12:9

Lester Holt concluded his evening news report last night with a story about a bear hunt. A teddy bear hunt, to be exact. Here in the United States, and in Canada, Iceland, New Zealand, Great Britain, and who knows where else, people are placing teddy bears in their windows, on their porches, and in the front yards. It's an open invitation to families and children, out on their appropriate “social distancing” walks, to have some fun and hunt for bear, in their own neighborhood.

Meagan McCluskey, of Time Magazine writes, “Taking a page from Michael Rosen’s 1989 children’s book *We’re Going on a Bear Hunt*, members of a number of communities across the globe are placing teddy bears and other stuffed animals in their homes’ windows to create a scavenger hunt-eques activity for kids who are stuck at home. While taking walks or drives around the neighborhood with their parents, kids in participating communities can have some fun by keeping an eye out for any number of stuffed animals that have been put on display at other houses.”

What a great distraction! What a fun way for communities to stay connected even as we have to stay apart. Because, let’s face it, even us introverts start to get a little punchy in seclusion. Just ask anyone living with me right now.

And so, I want to remind you and encourage you to take some time this week and reach out to someone you don’t normally talk to. Be intentional. Stay connected.

- Make a phone call
- Write a note
- Send a Facebook message, or a text

And here’s another way you can stay connected. I mentioned a few days ago that on Wednesdays (that’s tomorrow), we are going to begin an online prayer time at 7 PM, via Zoom. Zoom is an online meeting place, where we can get together in a video chat room (up to 100 of us). You can download Zoom on your computer by going to [Zoom.us](https://zoom.us), or you can get the Zoom App on your smart phone. If you want to participate, let me know and I’ll email you an invitation.

Alternatively, tomorrow evening at 7 PM, type in this link: <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/572429684>

Prayers Please

Don Smith was taken to the hospital on Monday. He had fallen a couple times, both on Sunday and Monday, and so Patti called EMS. They are running a lot of tests, and Patti is looking for a place that Don can go for rehab services. This is obviously a tough time to have to be doing all that, so please pray for Don, for Janet, and for Patti.

I spoke with Roger and Debbie Gross today, and they told me that JoAnn is back at American House, however they have not been able to talk to her because there appears to be an issue with her phone. The staff assures them that JoAnn is ok, but Debbie is frustrated at not being able to talk directly to her.

As the coronavirus pandemic continues to grow, more and more of us are being impacted, if not through personal infection, then certainly most of us know someone who is infected. Lisa’s brother, Rob, is trying to self-quarantine, but he is running high fever, and should be in the hospital. The father of one of Janine’s Head Start children tested positive and has been hospitalized, and one of her co-workers lost her best friend last week to Covid-19. She was the first fatality in Pontiac.

Pray that the bits of good news we are receiving about fewer fevers, and about potential drug therapies, will come more frequently. Pray that people will think and act responsibly, and be diligent about distancing.

Psalm 121

I lift up my eyes to the mountains— where does my help come from?

My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth.

He will not let your foot slip— he who watches over you will not slumber;

indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.

*The Lord watches over you— the Lord is your shade at your right hand;
the sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night.
The Lord will keep you from all harm— he will watch over your life;
the Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore.*

By the way, our bear is sitting on the front porch. Wish you could see him.

Peace and Health, Pete
