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*Pastor Jim's Thoughts and Prayers –July 2019*

Dear Friends,

Greetings in the name of our Loving God! I'm so excited about arriving in Eldred. Days ago it was a place on a map. However, I know my son Michael and I are beginning to develop friendships with you, the name of this community is no longer be a place on a map, instead is now "home" for us!

I think relationships are the mysterious ingredient that transforms a place on a map into a home. Home is a place in the heart where we feel peace, comfort and most of all, hope for the future. I think people long for "home" in the midst of the changing circumstances of life. We long for the assurance of an "eternal home". ***One of my favorite Bible stories is the "Parable of the Good Samaritan" from Luke 10:25-37. In it a man asks Jesus to tell him how to receive a sense of home and hope that will give him "eternal life".***

And behold, a lawyer stood up to put him to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, **"What is written in the law? How do you read?"** And he answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your strength, and with all with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." And he said to him, **"You have answered right; do this, and you will live."** - Luke 10:25-28 (Revised Standard Version)

Jesus tells the man to answer his own question. The man tells Jesus the way to eternal life is by having loving relationships with God, neighbor, and self. Jesus tells the man he is correct. Of course we know the story goes on and the man wants to know who his neighbor is. But that's another story for another day! ***What a powerful story. Jesus tells us the way to inherit eternal life is through our relationships with God, neighbor and self. Each day we are assured of God's promise that we can find home and eternal life by accepting Jesus as our Savior. We can begin each day with a prayer for God's blessing for amazing, joyful relationships that are guided by the Holy Spirit.***

The mission statement of the United Methodist Church is to "make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world." I'm looking forward to being your brother in Christ and your pastor. I'm honored to have this opportunity to share ministry with you in the community of Eldred. I'm honored to begin relationships with you as we invite people to a relationship with God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

The best way to reach me is to call or text me on my cell phone (412)496-5308. Or email me at jimcannistraci@gmail.com. Looking forward to seeing you in Church! I enjoy visiting and sharing a cup of coffee! Let's plan to visit soon!

Blessings,

Pastor Jim



Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.  
**The people of the United Methodist Church**