

IN TOUCH

2020: WHAT'S TO BE THANKFUL FOR?

Dear Friend:

I am writing this In Touch and sending it on the eve of Thanksgiving. Maybe you have already asked yourself this question, or maybe you will ask tomorrow: "What do I have to be thankful for?"

I ended a K-12 tutoring session 40 minutes ago via Zoom (an online meeting platform). All our tutoring has been online since September 1, with no plan to be in person until a vaccine is widely available. I digress....back to my point....I asked the tutoring team to give me one point of thankfulness in 2020. Our owner and doctoral professor at Marshall University, Dr. Nega Debela said: "We're alive and we're breathing". That is so basic but something we don't take for granted these days. As of 7:24 p.m. tonight 265,329 people are not alive in the U.S. due to COVID. Now, if you are like me and you do not believe every death reported due to COVID is accurate---you should still be thankful you are alive. Let's go to a ridiculous number: say fully one half of the reported deaths are really NOT due to COVID but just classified wrong. So what? 133,000 people are NOT breathing, NOT alive due to COVID! Still not concerned because 72% of all deaths are nursing home related in Ohio? What does that really matter in a life and death situation? 62,274 people in Ohio still died due to COVID (ok, take the ridiculous one half scenario....still over 31,000 people died.

Please join me in being thankful---you, me we are still breathing. Though some will (wisely) limit family size get together for Thanksgiving, we can get together and we probably WILL eat too much. Be thankful that though it's been quite a ride when Joe Biden takes the oath of office it will not be because of a coup, a military takeover installing a General as President, it will not be because of civil war, it will be because we have a Constitution that has stood the test of time. Speaking of Constitution, give thanks for all the freedoms we have because of it! The freedom to worship, the freedom of speech, the freedom to peacefully protest, even if someone commits a criminal act while protesting they have the freedom of trial by a jury. Give thanks for your freedom to keep and bear arms, freedom to go to church, if you have a compromised immune system you have the freedom to watch our church services every Sunday live and if you're not on Facebook you have the freedom to go to our website on Wednesday or before and watch the recorded service on our website. We have freedom due to our military, we have the best care system in the world. I have been fortunate to talk to VISA (not the charge card) seeking people from many different countries in the world. Name the country....Philippines, Mexico, China, Thailand, Israel, Haiti, India,etc. What country, by far, is the hardest country to get into? The United States of America. We are seen as the greatest country of freedom and opportunity in the world. I could share with you stories of people trying to get

their Visa's to the U.S. and waited for days (yes days) in line. Where people spend their life savings just to get one person in the family here. Sorry, but I've got keep this from becoming a book. This Thanksgiving. Psalm 107:1, "Give thanks to God, his love endures forever".

Giving Thanks, Pastor Mike

Prayer Concerns: Be thankful, Dick Hickernell (cancer), Quinn Fetters (Brain aneurysm and son of our Bishop Todd Fetters), COVID19 vaccine distribution.

Events: THIS SUNDAY PLEASE...stay around NO MORE than 1 hour for Christmas decorations we are going a little light but you are still needed. No stay, no free lunch!

This Sunday is the first Sunday of Advent. This Sunday we will take poinsettia orders for dedication/in memory of. We are only taking 10 orders, \$10 each, first come first get, see Clarabell.