



June 8, 2020

Southeastern District Video Conference for Professional Church Workers and Congregational Leaders

Walking Together as We Care for One Another in Uncertain Times


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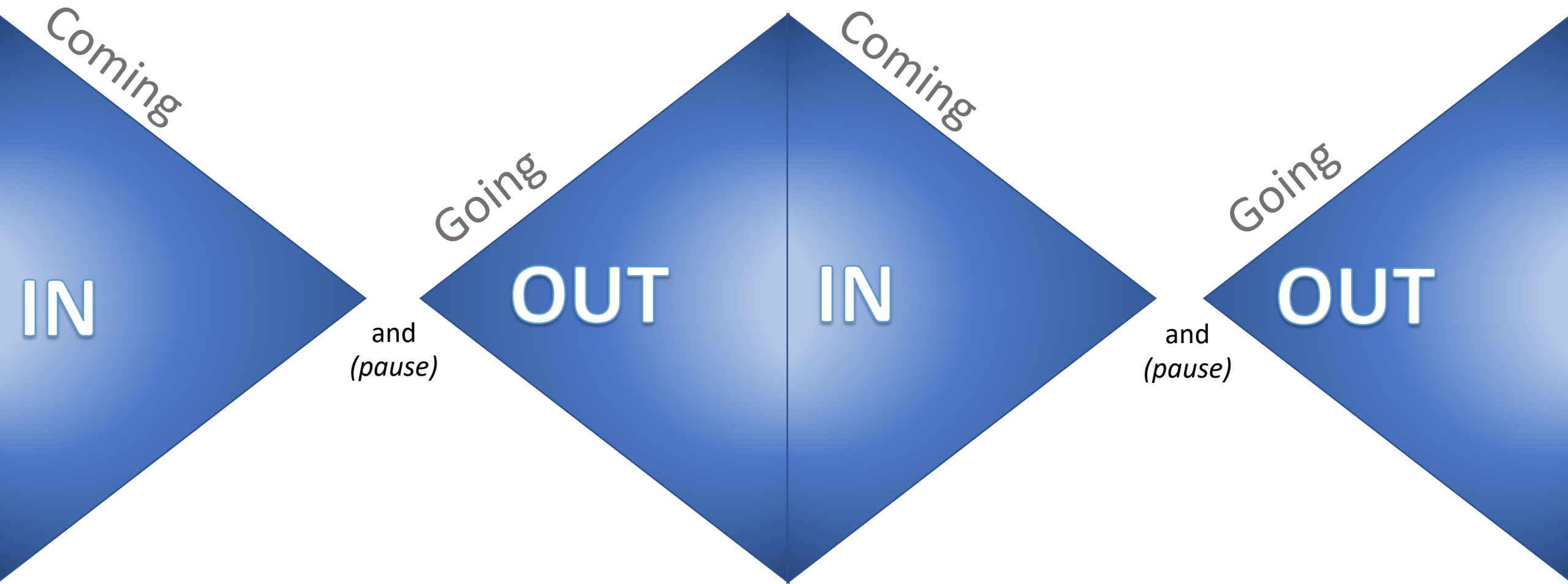
Focus today

To raise your self awareness
for greater self care so you
can confidently care for
others.



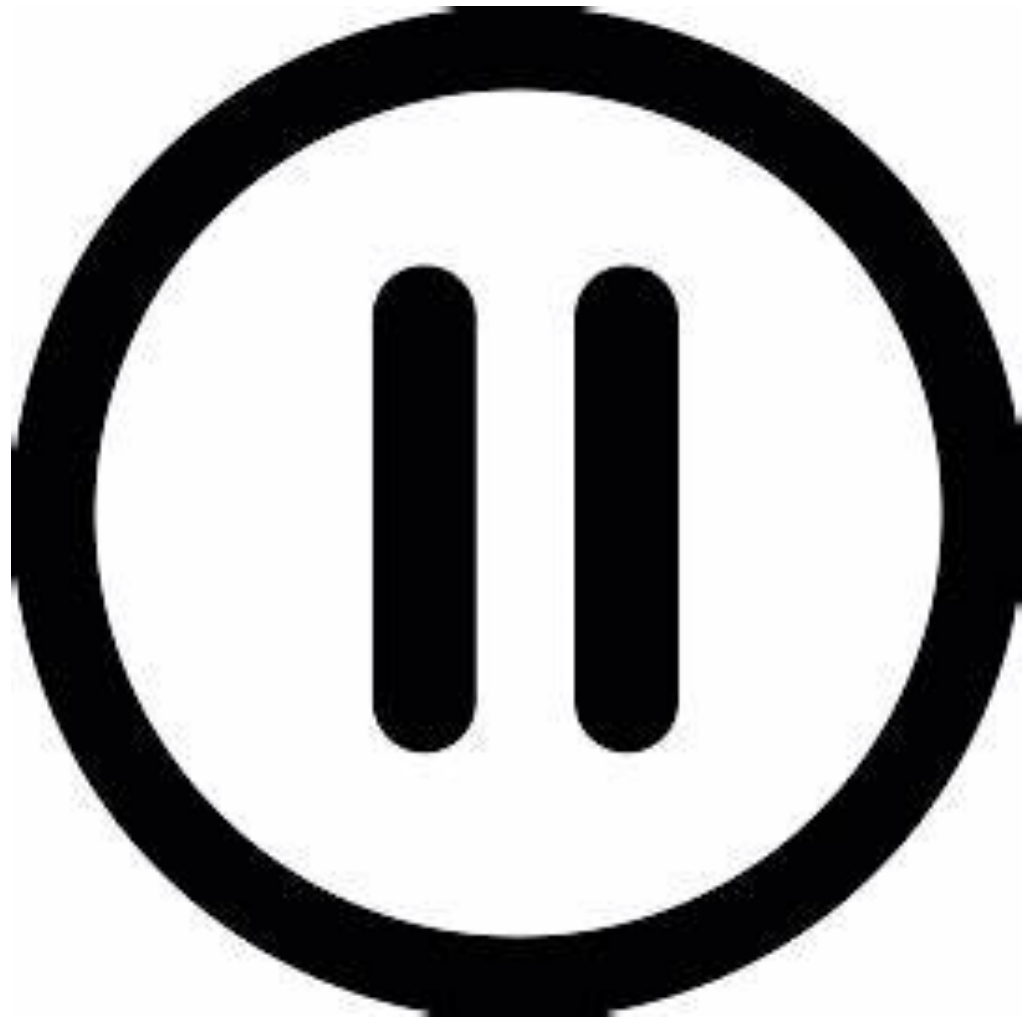
I lift my eyes to the hills—where does my help come from? My help comes from the LORD.

Psalm 121:1



The LORD will watch over your coming and going, both now and forevermore.

Psalm 121:7



to be known as
“people of the pause”

#pause

In the coming...

and

In the going...

PRAISE THE LORD!

Where have we come?

- 13+ weeks of walking the same road with our parishioners through a global pandemic with no available vaccine or definitive medical countermeasures
- We are doing our best to
 - Care for our families
 - Obey different state executive orders
 - Honor each other and respect the decisions we are making
 - Pivot daily to respond to needs
 - Maximize technology
 - Keep our wits

Where are we going?

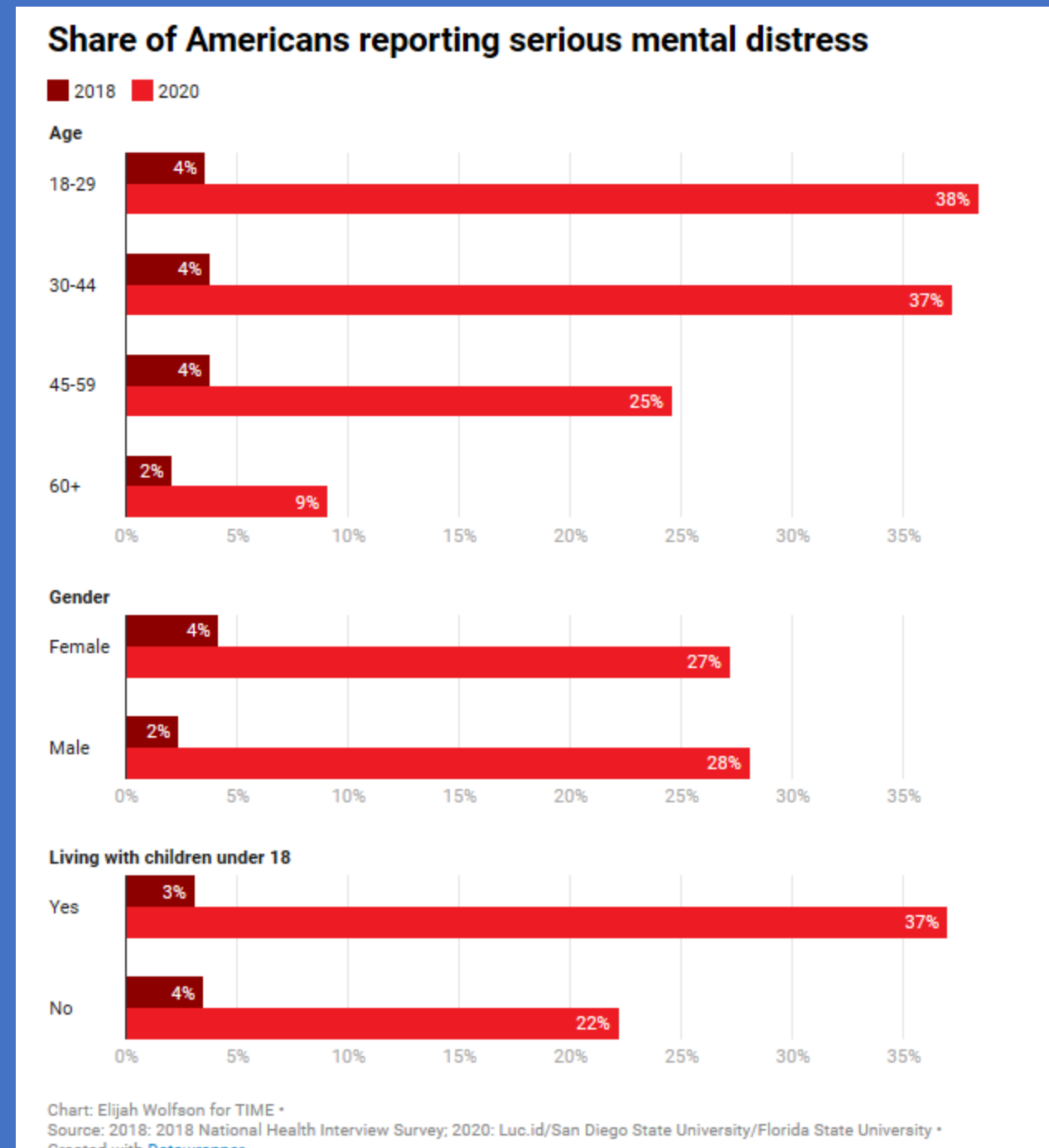
- This summer is looking very different
- State restrictions are lifting
- Tensions are increasing in our union
- **Churches workers are getting tired**
- **Psychological and economical stress are taking a toll; depression and anxiety rates are skyrocketing**
- Second COVID wave is a real possibility
- Our trajectory remains good because “the Holy Spirit’s signature is over it all”
(quote from President Denninger)

*“Death is all around us, we are not afraid,
written is the story, empty is the grave.”*

US Mental Health Today

(New study by San Diego State University and Florida State University, currently in preprint which means it has not gone under peer review and formal publication)

- More than one in four American adults meet the criteria for serious mental health distress and illness, representing a 700% increase from pre-pandemic data
- Young adults and those with children are experiencing the most severe spikes



Decision Fatigue is real

- As Church Worker
 - “Is the church/school going to be able to keep paying me?”
 - “Should we comply with restrictions from government and health agencies?”
 - “How do we make decisions with ever changing information?”
 - “How do we think about these matters theologically?”
 - “Should we open the building?”
 - “When is the best time to resume activities?”
 - “How do we best support our members?”
 - “How effective is our online presence, are we engaging folks?”
 - “What decisions need to be made as we see donations decreasing? Will we be able to pay our workers?”
 - “Should I return to work or stay working from home?”
 - “How do I answer my pending call?”
- As Family Member
 - “How do I keep my family safe?”
 - “How are we going to try and get groceries this week?”
 - “How can we all share devices in the home to complete work and school assignments?”
 - “Do we allow our children to play with the neighbors?”
 - “Whose turn is it to make dinner?”
 - “How much screen time is acceptable?”
 - “What decisions do we need to make about summer?”
 - “How do I best help my children cope?”
 - “What ways can I help my elderly parents? Should I visit them?”

#pause

Two Minute Trinity Breath Prayer
copyright Stacey Tasler Crosson 2019

Starting in the lower right-hand corner, slowly and deeply breathe in through your nose for five counts. Pause and hold your breath for five counts. Then release your breath slowly and exhale through your mouth for five counts. Do this four times to get used to the rhythm. Feel free to trace the triangle with your finger or marker as you cycle through.

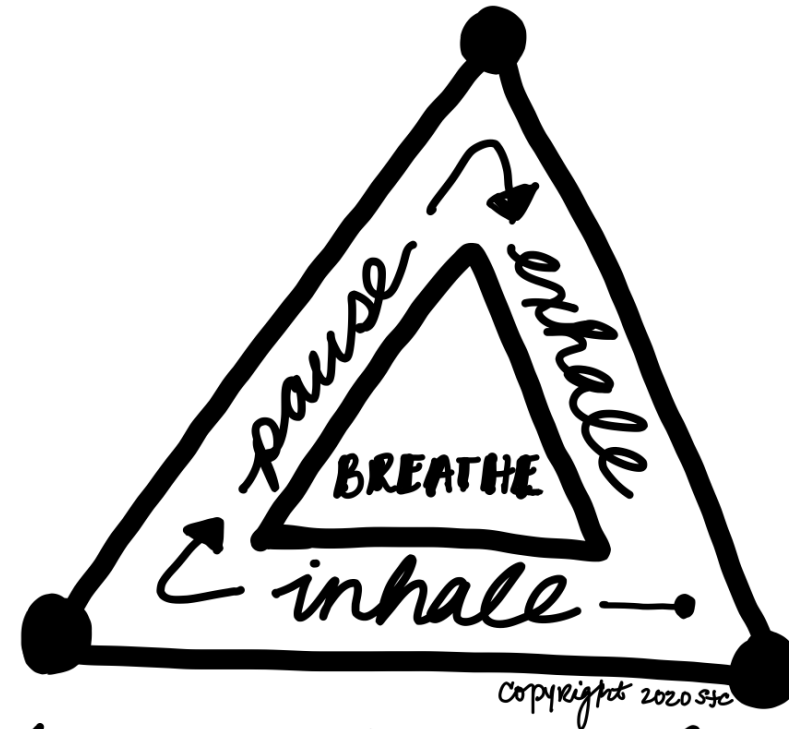
Cycle through the triangle four additional times, using it as a prayer prompt:

Breathe in God the Father, Creator and Maker, *then hold/pause, and exhale/release.*

Breathe in God the Son, Jesus, our Savior and Friend, *then hold/pause, and exhale/release.*

Breathe in God the Holy Spirit, our Comforter and Guide, *then hold/pause, and exhale/release.*

Breathe in God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, *then hold/pause, and exhale Amen.*

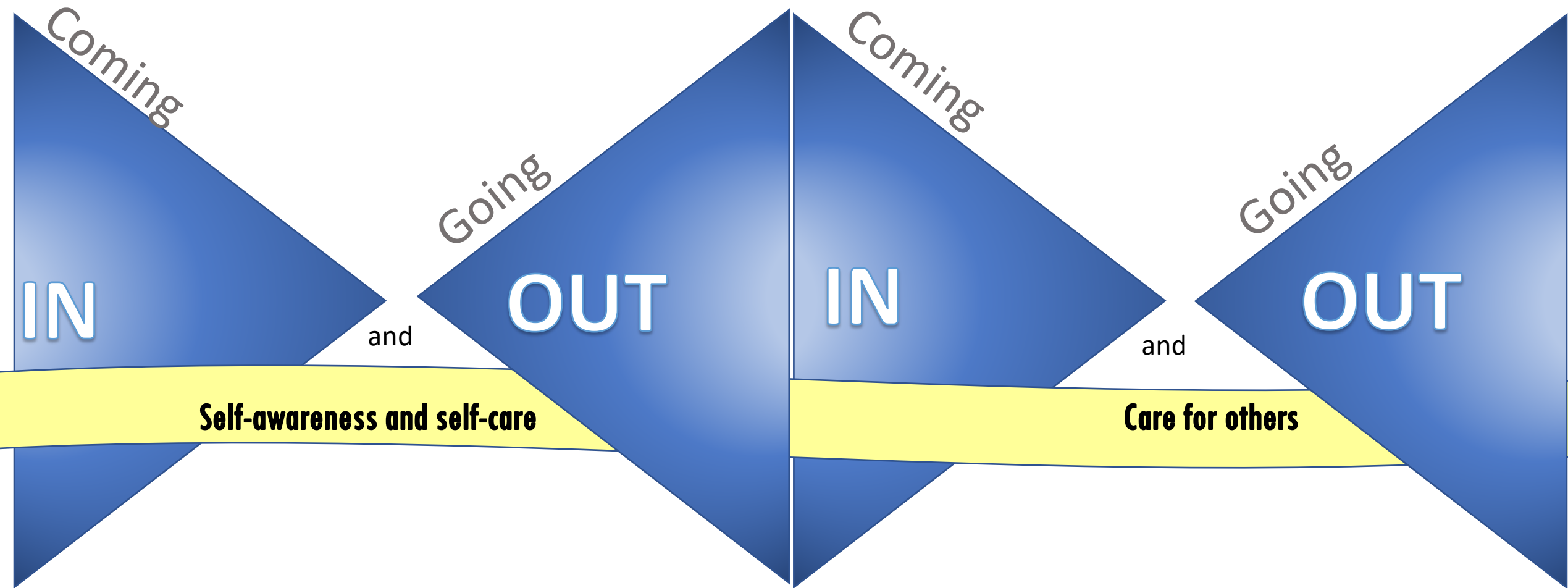


Trinity Breath Prayer
FOR EMOTIONAL REGULATION
AND MINDFULNESS



I lift my eyes to the hills—where does my help come from? My help comes from the LORD.

Psalm 121:1



The LORD will watch over your coming and going, both now and forevermore.

Psalm 121:7

*“You do the Church a great service
when you make self care a priority.”*

-wisdom from 80 year old pastor

Self care serves the church.

- Healthy workers disciple healthy leaders and shape healthy congregations
- Healthy workers are ready to pivot confidently when change occurs and stay committed to the mission and ministry of the Church



*Worker Care
Resources can be
found at
[http://se.lcms.org/re
sources/worker-care/](http://se.lcms.org/resources/worker-care/)*

Self-Care...

...taking on more activities?

...limiting draining activities?

...putting down work and detaching?

Grow in self awareness

Regularly check in with yourself

Identify your feelings

Stay “in step with the Spirit”

*“Since we live by the Spirit,
let us keep in step with the Spirit.”*

Gal 5:25

SELF CHECKIN: <u>What's my number?</u>		
Hyper/Hypo-Arousal Thermometer	10	Highest distress/anxiety ever consumed/reactive/“red”
	9	Extremely anxious/distressed Functioning is severely impaired
	8	Very anxious/distressed great difficulty to concentrate
	7	High anxiety/distress, constant interference with performance
	6	Quite anxious/distressed Struggling with performing
	5	Moderate anxiety/distress uncomfortable but still performing
	4	Mild distress and beginning to feel edgy and uncomfortable
	3	Mild anxiety/distress no interference with performance
	2	Minimal anxiety and distress no interference with performance
	1	Alert and awake Concentrating well
	0	Totally relaxed Concentrating very well
-1	Wanting to shut down but staying engaged and performing well	
-2	Starting to shut down/using distractions to stay engaged	
-3	Pushing through/struggling to stay engaged but performing ok	
-4	Pulling away emotionally/ interfering with performance	
-5	Conflicted and growing distant with others/hard to execute plans	
-6	Cancelling plans/not showing up/ delayed reactions	
-7	Pulling inward/constricting/ performance dulls	
-8	Shut down/motivation gone Going through the motions	
-9	Feeling suffocated/not present blank thoughts/numb	
-10	Complete disconnect/shut down not performing/engaging others	

Fight or Flight Response

Hyper-arousal

- anxious -overreactions -chaotic responses -aggression
- outbursts -distress -anger/rage -rigidness
- impulsivity -racing thoughts -obsessive/compulsive thoughts

-Dysregulation begins – getting agitated

Free & Fruitful Response

“C” Space

Comfort Zone + Christ in Me

“in step with the Spirit”

Calm + cool + collected + connected
 courageous + compassionate + creative + confident
 clarity + choices + care and concern for others

-Dysregulation begins – shutting down

Freeze Response

Hypo-arousal

- dissociation -not present -disconnected -autopilot
- memory loss -flat -unavailable -shut down
- lethargic -depressed -numb -unmotivated
- separation from self/emotions -separation from others

What draws us back into the “C” Space?

- Slow, deep breathing
- Remembering Christ in us
- Confession/forgiveness
- Gratefulness/praise
- Calming the body
- Telling ourselves the truth
- Moving/Being in nature
- Human touch
- Solitude
- Compassionate community
- _____
- _____

What sends us out of the “C” Space?

- Fear/need for control
- Bodily dysregulation
- Trauma related beliefs
- Negative thinking patterns
- Ego/pride
- Rejection/abandonment
- Over/under-functioning
- Chronic pain
- Lack of sleep
- _____
- _____

Proactive Self-Care...Tell it like it is

Be honest with your family, team, congregation

- Admit where you are
- Try this: *I feel...when...I need...*
- Place yourselves in places to receive care from others

As Luther said,

“A theologian of the cross can call a thing what it is.”

A Pastor

Sharing his stress
during COVID19

“It’s a stress that’s just off the charts right now for me. Usually I’m able to handle normal amounts of stress well through my diet and exercise routine and practicing patience but with current events and increased personal demands, I notice myself responding to others with frustration and curt speech.”

Proactive Self-Care...Ask for help

Learn to yield and accept influence from others

Know your boundaries

Get good at asking *“What do you think?”*

A DCE

Sharing her needs
during COVID19

“Joy? There really isn’t any. I’m feeling pulled, as a wife and mom and worker in the church. I’m just so tired.

I need my church to better understand the pressure I’m under and not just with words but with action.”

Proactive Self-Care... Reclaim Sabbath

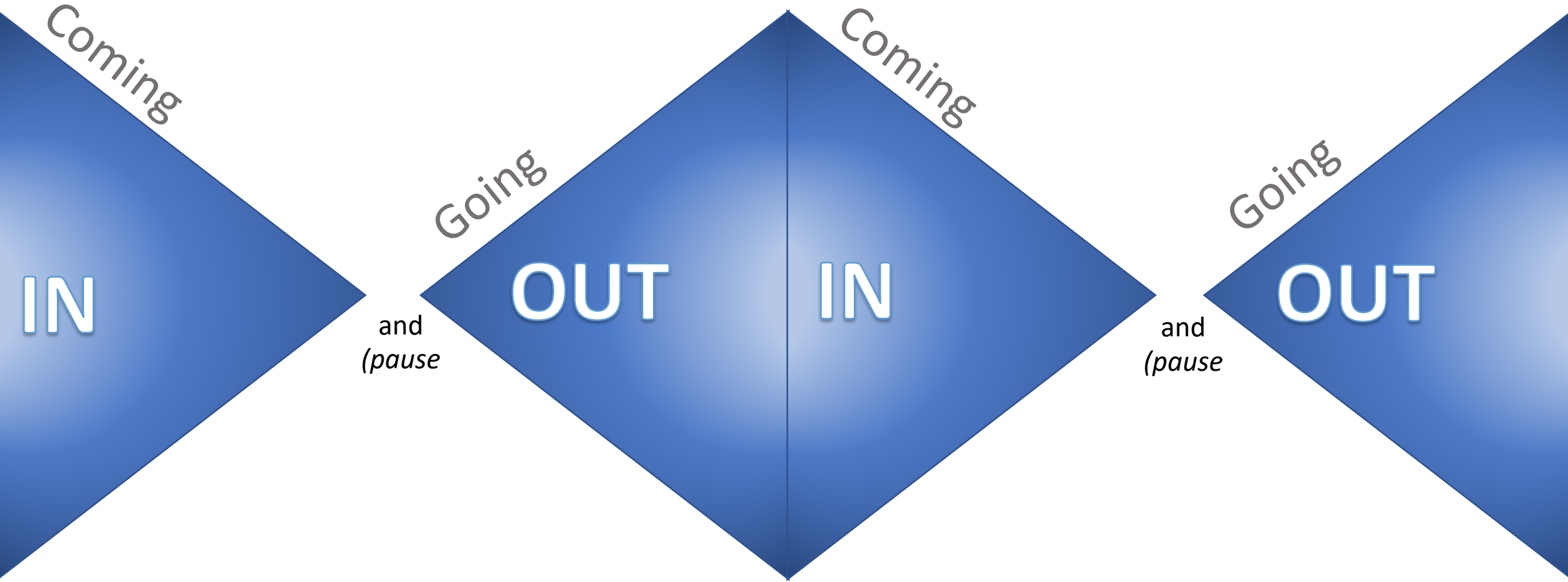
A weekly, 24-hour practice of stopping

God commanded it. It's how He gives us back our breath.

A daily pause and stopping for perspective

"We are human beings not a human doings."

The importance of the holy pause...



The LORD will watch over your coming and going, both now and forevermore.

Psalm 121:7

connect

linger

laugh

recharge

delight

rest

detach

move

Reclaim

SABBATH

STOP

reset

remember

breathe

be free

play

sleep

restore

resist



Caring for others...

You can't give what you haven't received

Honor the tension between leading others and keeping your family safe – be honest with your struggle

Lead with compassion and creative thinking

Mitigate risk with the phrase: “time, space, people, place”

Caring for others...

All age groups are grieving

Lead with Validation and Grace

Say “it makes sense you feel like that...”

Pause/wait; try not to react (“feel the feels”)

Coach emotions; don’t “fix them” or “manage them”

A TIME TO STOP AND RESET

Monday Breather

for Professional Church Workers

Join us online in a confidential space to
focus on self care practices



TAKE A BREATHER!

*The SED Worker Care
Team hosts monthly
Zoom sessions to
focus on self care
practices*

JULY 13, 12:00-1:00 PM
“CREATING A SELF CARE PLAN”

AUGUST 10, 12:00-1:00 PM
“EMOTION COACHING”

SIGN UP [HERE](#)

**IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, TEXT
STACEY CROSSON AT 571-326-5580**



Christopher Willard:

*A psychiatry lecturer at Harvard
Medical School and author of
"The Breathing Book"*

“COVID has been hard for our kids, on their mental health, on their impulse control and their ability to regulate their emotions. Children may regress to the pastimes and misbehavior of their younger years because it makes them feel safe. Kids also aren't getting the social reinforcement from peers that tells them tantrums aren't cool. That's good peer pressure they're missing.

Kids need in-person, social interaction this summer,
so...

Think “Holy Huddle”

Manage expectations and get creative

“Your children will follow your lead, remember that!”


In closing, remember...

We are in a marathon, not a sprint.

You will not be able to serve others confidently if you are not making self care a priority.

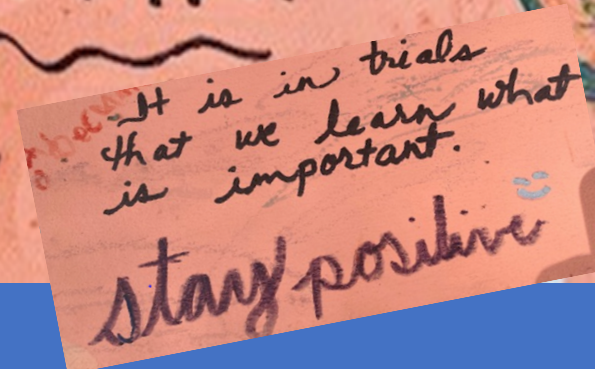
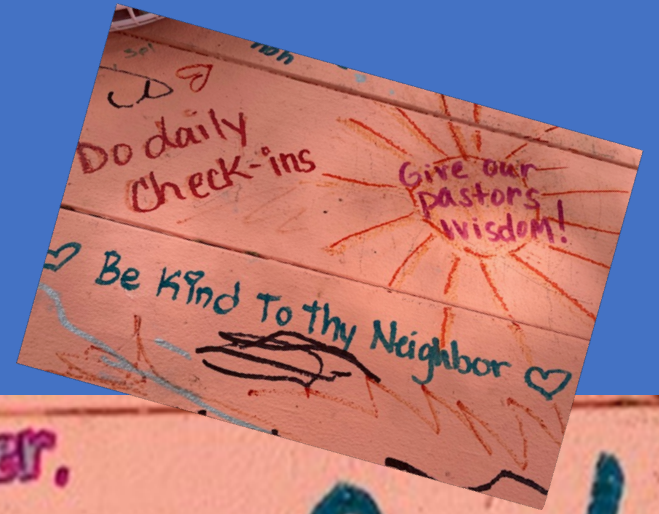
Everyone is processing the events of today in their own way and on their own timeline.

Be aware of any secondary traumatic stress you might be experiencing.

A diverse group of people, including men and women of various ethnicities, are gathered in a meeting. They are smiling and looking towards each other, suggesting a positive and collaborative atmosphere. The background is slightly blurred, focusing attention on the group's interaction.

THANK YOU!
You are doing a phenomenal job.

Encouragement from the neighborhood!!



Successful weeklong food drive for ECHO. Thank you to my neighbors in Lyndhurst Condos! #ECHO #iNeighborhood



THE VIRGINIA GAZETTE

The Helpers: Kingsmill couple lead movement to bring hope through a single lit candle

By ALISON JOHNSON

VIRGINIA GAZETTE

MAR 27, 2020 | 1:48 PM





Amber Harrill Woller

1 hr · 🌐

There's pain. There's anger. There's violence. There's destruction. BUT there's this. Donations to help those whose grocery stores have been destroyed. Thankful for those who want to build rather than destroy. This is Minneapolis.



Greg Finke

23 hrs · 🌐

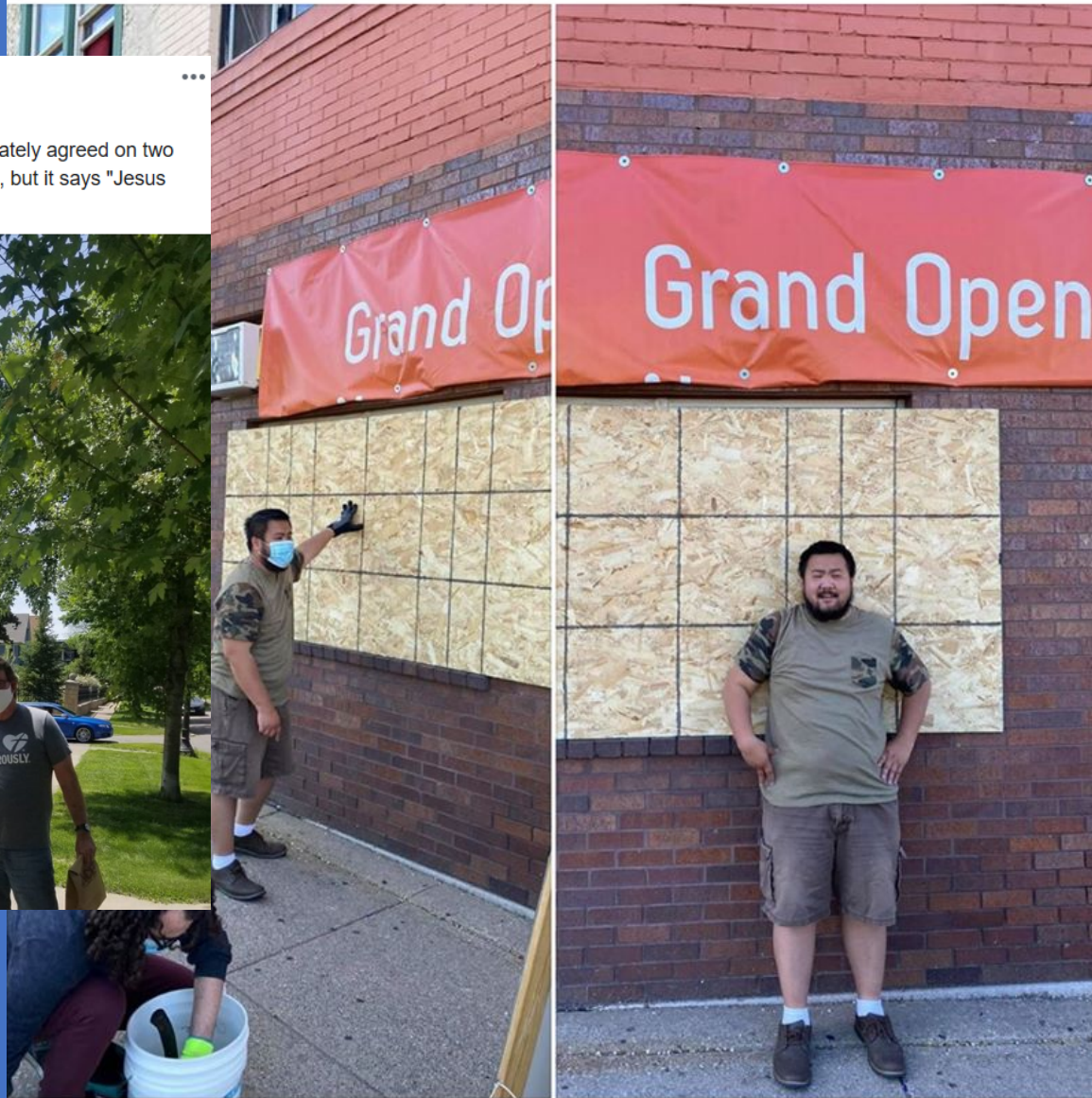
We were out for a walk today and met Peter. We immediately agreed on two things: peace and Jesus. (You probably can't see his hat, but it says "Jesus Power.")



Carl Johnson


Yesterday at 5:23 PM · 🌐

My community showed up to watch over our store.



MPRNEWS.ORG

Volunteers flock to Twin Cities neighborhoods to clean up ravaged streets



Living Hope DCE Virtual Choir 2020

YOUTUBE.COM

Living Hope DCE Virtual Choir

Almost 50 DCEs participated in singing and playing Living Hope in the DCE...





Youth leaders stand on the front lines of Baltimore protest

Baltimore's black youth are helping lead a movement to end racial injustice that is grounded in the collective ...

[The Baltimore Sun](#) · 2h

Discussion Questions

1. Sabbath: to stop, pause, reset, be free, breathe, restore, linger, rest, delight, detach, refresh, remember, resist, connect, restore, detach, recharge, play, laugh, sleep
 - Which Sabbath word speaks to your heart? Why?
 - What ways can you cultivate more Sabbath into your life?
2. When you pop out of your “C Space,” where do you typically go, into hyperarousal or hypo arousal? What sends you out of your “C Space”? What draws you back in?
3. What boundaries do you need to put into place, or re-communicate, with your congregation? How can you better care for your family at this time?