

BLESSINGS ALWAYS

September 30, 2021

Association Minister Message

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INTEGRITY. "Establish justice for me, Lord, because I have walked with INTEGRITY. I've trusted the Lord without wavering." (Psalm 26:1 CEB). The Bible is filled with descriptions of both saints and sinners encountering different, difficult, dangerous situations AND encountering love, inclusion, generosity and affirmation. During these days of pandemic and isolation, relationships suffer as loneliness and fear often prevent reaching out to one another. Shared words have a dangerous and accusatory nature to them and trust of others has diminished.

So many voices have been raised and there is even shouting at one another (and shouting at God) in disagreement often wondering if what is being said is heard by others. We are speaking past each other and not with one another. So many differing opinions are being shared that have false claims or truth. It is a matter of the *INTEGRITY* or reliability of what is being said that is causing the conflict. Warren Buffet, investor and financial advisor to many said, *"Somebody once said that in looking for people to hire, you look for three qualities: INTEGRITY, intelligence, and energy. And if you don't have the first, the other two will kill you."*

How do we live our Christian faith with *INTEGRITY*? Can what we say and do be trusted? Is their honesty and reliability in how we live and act in our relationships with one another? Biblical language uses the word *"uprightness"* as a description of Christian living. Jesus reminds us that love of God, others and ourselves takes our entire being *"to love God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength and our neighbor as ourselves."* It is more than the *"letter"* of the law: it is the *"intent"* of the law in establishing relationships with *INTEGRITY*.

May we walk in the presence of God and with one another *"without wavering"* as we walk in God's truth as people of *INTEGRITY. BLESSINGS ALWAYS.*