

## Steve's United

One time I had to save the lives of my wife and three small children. We were up on the boundary waters in northern Minnesota along the Canadian border. It was supposed to be a nice day. We had rented a boat with a Johnson fifty horsepower outboard motor. We took off in the morning. We planned to go out for a couple of hours on the far shores of Lake Saginaw, have lunch and then return in time for the three kids to take naps. We were watching our time because one of our twins, who had a metabolic disorder, had to be back for his medication.

Well things didn't turn out the way we had planned. When we were out our motor broke. We looked and suddenly realized there were no oars in the boat. We were adrift. The three kids started crying. Phoebe and I became worried but kept panic at bay. We took stock of what we had on board. We had some candy for the kids. I had my wallet with some cash and a few credit cards. Precious little.

After sitting for several hours, we realized we had to take some drastic measures. I grew up in the ocean and have always been an avid and strong swimmer. I tied the bowline around my waist and began swimming. We hoped that I could tow our boat out into the middle of the lake where maybe we could flag down a passing boat. I swam and towed our boat two miles.

The good news is we were discovered by some canoeists who towed our boat to where there was another motorboat. We made it back to the dock by sundown. We were back at the camp feeding the kids and most importantly, got Taylor his medication. All ended safe and sound.

Were you ever in a time of survival? In many ways, these are the times we find ourselves in with the Covid virus. It's been a long six months. We hear about the millions of cases and the thousands who have died in our own country. It's hard to get our heads around. Unless you've been diagnosed with the disease it feels distant. It's hard to think about keeping our guard up and staying safe. Yet, that's what we need to do. We need to do whatever it takes to save ourselves and help save others.

To what end would you got to save someone? Would you wrap a rope around yourself and swim? Would you walk a mile, two, maybe twenty? If you knew someone was dying of the virus how far would you go to save them? This is why for me wearing a mask, keeping social distance and limiting our group size is a pretty simple thing to do. If I knew it would save someone, my family and friends, my congregation, even myself, then I willingly am going to do whatever it takes.

It's Fall leaning into winter. Our coldest months are ahead. They tell us the worse is yet to come. Will we have the ability to hunker down and weather the storm?

Of course we will! We're resilient people! We have our God and Christ who love us! We have our community, our church around us! If we stick together, we can make it through anything.

The challenge is we need to stick together. We need to connect via worship, adult education, committee's and small groups. We need to call each other, write letters and emails and definitely pray for one another. I hope you're reading the eblast and clicking on the joy and concerns so you can be mindful of the sick and ill among us.

When I was pulling the boat, I had a very clear image of where we were going. We were going to make it to the dock, and I was going to do whatever it took to get us there. I have the same feeling about us now. I have a very clear image of where we're going. I envision a day when this will all be behind us. We'll be back together in our new/renovated building. We'll flower the cross and celebrate communion. We will never take for granted the love we have for each other and for our God.

This all happens if you have the self-fortitude to do whatever it takes to survive! But not only for yourself, but for all those you love and care about. Your boat is full of precious cargo.

So, tie the rope around your waist and let us go for a swim!