

### **Trail Guide -- Week of February 10, 2020**

No worries! No problem! Worry may be unavoidable at times, as all of us tend to fret about some aspect of our lives some time or another. However, chronic or excessive worry can affect our physical, emotional, and spiritual health. In some cases, worries may interfere with daily life. Frequent worry may be a sign of generalized anxiety. And yet, worrying is not always bad. In certain situations, worry and anxiety can lead us to make healthy, productive decisions. For example, worrying about finances can help prevent us from spending money recklessly. Worrying about basic safety may inspire us to lock our doors and windows at night.

On another positive note, worry reminds us to pray. One healthy response to worry is to remind ourselves of, and reflect on, the promises and faithfulness of God to provide. Several of these verses are listed below, along with thoughts for our reflection. May God strengthen each of us in our faith to know and comprehend that God's will for us is good.

Mon, 2/10     **Philippians 4:6-7** – When we turn over our concerns to God we discover that God blesses us with an assurance that helps to guard our hearts and our minds from undue anxiety. By the way, this turning over may have to be done again, and again, and even again – as many times as worry comes knocking. Whatever concerns weigh you down, invite Christ to lift them from your shoulders to bear them for you.

Tues, 2/11     **1 John 4:18** – Often, worry and fear walk hand in hand to confront us. John invites us to focus on the love that God expresses to us. The only way love can drive out fear and worry is for us to shift our focus and lift our eyes to see God's love at work. Take time throughout the day to think on the ways you have experienced – or are experiencing – God's love in your and others' lives.

Wed, 2/12     **2 Timothy 1:7** – When it comes to facing our worries and anxieties, we remind ourselves that we are not alone! God works in and through us to en-courage and strengthen us. Feel the power of the Holy Spirit to strengthen you when you feel weak or powerless; to guide you when you feel perplexed; to give you courage to face life's challenges with confidence and grace.

Thurs, 2/13    **Isaiah 41.4** – Worry often enters in via our “self-talk” imaginings of what *might* happen. Here are words of “self-talk” for ourselves, and also to share with others going through anxious times: “Do not fear, for I am with you... I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you...”

Fri, 2/14     **Psalms 94:19** – What brings you joy? Where is the well from which you draw the refreshing waters of rejoicing? Joy is another remedy for excessive worry and anxiety – they cannot coexist in the same space. Joy comes through experiencing and remembering God's consolations, past and present.

Sat, 2/15     **Romans 8:38-39** – I am almost tempted to say, “saving the best for last...” Regardless of what you face in life, *nothing* can get in the way of God's love for you. Nothing.

Pray for our time of worship, learning, and fellowship tomorrow. Invite a friend to join you. Come expecting to encounter the risen Christ and to experience the love of God!