



Connections from Janis Parker, Youth Minister

I have been traveling in California to connect with adult “kids.” We have been having conversations about self-care in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Covid-19 primarily attacks the respiratory system; thus, regular cardiovascular exercise is important. Continuing my own cardio conditioning can be tricky while traveling. My preference is biking and rowing. Those are not options, so I knew I needed to adjust. There were steep sidewalks and stairs; I decided to take them on.

I stood for some time at the base of these stairs. I knew that it was going to be tough. At moments when I don't want to follow through, I recall the words of Jesus in Mark 12:30-31. *“Love the Lord your God with all your heart, your soul, and with all your mind and with all your strength. And, second, love your neighbor as yourself.”*

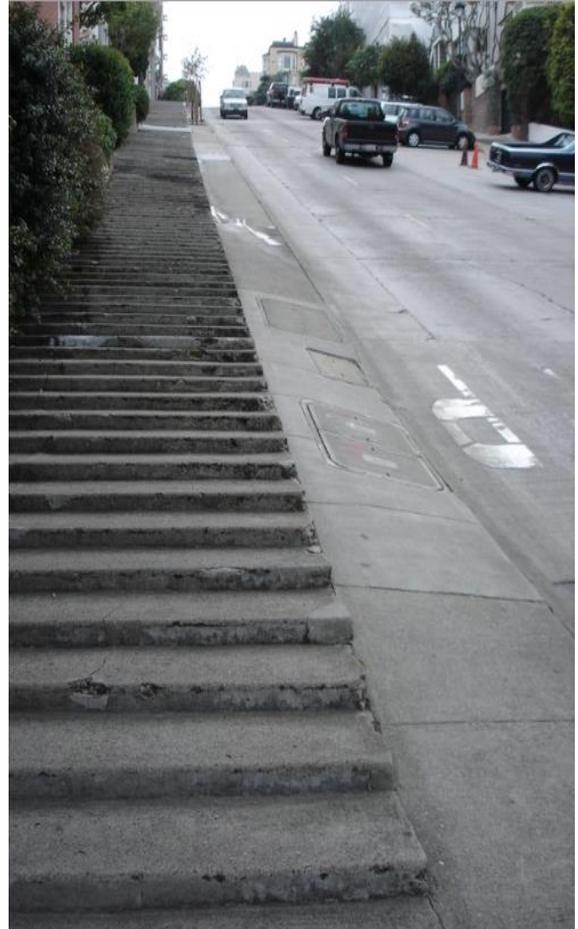
My children have heard me speak on those words throughout their lives: **The call to love God is a call to love yourself.** It is a call to be completely responsible for your mental, emotional, spiritual and physical well-being. The greatest gift you can give someone else is to take full responsibility for embracing YOU and caring for yourself.

I decided that my San Francisco daily cardio plan would be to walk these steps 8 times, one for each member of our growing family. I name each member at the bottom and then pray for them at the top while attempting to catch my breath.

I'm rarely alone during these workouts. Someone usually shows up for the same purpose. And, we become “neighbors” of encouragement. What a blessing!

What are the adjustments you are being asked to make?

I am keeping you in my “steps of prayer” as you too, make the adjustments to take care of your health so you can then care for others!



*You don't have to see the whole staircase,
just take the first step.*

Martin Luther King, Jr.