

BLESSINGS ALWAYS  
March 12, 2025  
Association Minister Message  
Rev. Daniel L. Busch

*IMITATORS*. Paul wrote his letter to the Philippians while in prison to encourage the members of the early Christian church to remain committed to their faith in Jesus Christ. Even though Paul was going through a difficult time, his letter expressed words of comfort to the members without seeking comfort for himself. *“Brothers and sisters, become IMITATORS of me, and watch those who live this way—you can use us as models.” (3:17)*. It is important how we act or speak in front of others, for our actions and words can show others the way of being a Christian. There is a story of a driver who was driving dangerously and shouting at other drivers in an unkind manner. A police officer stopped the driver and asked to see the car registration, accusing the driver of stealing the car. The driver asked, *“Why did you stop me driving my car?”* *“Well,”* said the officer, *“your actions did not match the words of the bumper stickers on your car expressing Christian love, and I thought it was a stolen car.”*

Being *IMITATORS* of Jesus Christ is lived by words of kindness to others, doing justice with and for the least of society, and loving and praying for enemies in such a way that reconciliation can happen. Paul was harassed for being a Christian by religious leaders and Roman captors. Paul reminds us that Christ chose to suffer both for and with us. Throughout history, there have been *IMITATORS* of Christ who took a stand for ways of peace, sharing wealth and love so others might live, and their faith was instrumental in changing society. In our time selfishness, greed, and flaunting of wealth endanger people and cause suffering towards others. Paul’s words are the inspiration to the faithful to never give up doing good when it would be so much easier to allow the injustices of society to prevail. We are blessed to have *IMITATORS*—Christ-followers—around us who guide us in making this world as God would intend it to be. During our Lenten journey to the resurrection, we are called to love as Christ loves us. We are loved unconditionally, and that love offers renewal, so that *“surely goodness and mercy shall follow us all the days of lives”* with *BLESSINGS ALWAYS*.