

## We are all in this together! God's got us!

*Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. Philippians 4:6 NRSV*

Dear Friends, HaPpY HaPpY ThUrSDaY!

Do not be anxious about anything? REALLY?

I mean, what about the run on toilet paper or lysol wipes or the fear that courses through a parent's mind when they hear that school is out "indefinitely"...like a Spring Break that has no end...in sight...anytime soon...and no camps or even playdates on the horizon. Don't be anxious? That's like have a dentist tell you not to worry about pain when they are out of novocaine and you need a root canal.

Anxiety is real. And it goes deeper than the surface level issues.

We are worried about getting sick. We are worried about members of our tribe getting sick. We are worried about our financial affairs and our jobs. We are wondering how we got to this place in such an astounding giant spontaneous leap. We are wondering how it will end, when it will end, and if this is the world ending?

How can we avoid being anxious and fearful and paralyzed with panic?

- By taking a deep breath...and then another...and then another.
- By recognizing how God is present in our midst right now in the simple everyday ways God is always there. Today the rain is watering the earth. Soon crocuses, daffodils, tulips and hyacinths will push their way out of the earth and bring us the color of tiny radical resurrections. Think about that for a minute. We put ugly, dead looking clumps of stuff into the ground in the fall...and then the dark, cold winter comes, the freezing subzero temperatures, and those clumps of stuff lie under the ground for months until the earth begins to warm again. Then the sun along with the rain, and more light comes, and these clumps do what they were created to do...they rise and bloom always proclaiming the truth of God's promise, year in and year out.
- By understanding that God has made a promise to each of us that God will never abandon us—not once, not ever no matter how good or awful we have been....no matter what challenges or horrors or joys or wonders come our way.
- By understanding the gift of each other—all good things that have come from God. Simple things. Beautiful things. Ongoing things. Is your heart beating? Can you make that so? It is gift...all those heart beats all the years you are old.

- We live, as Martin Luther would say, in the “already, but not yet” kingdom of God. We live in this place in between...birth and death and eternal life. We do it all by faith...which, I acknowledge, we might be needing more of right now.

So...how do we make sure we have enough? after all, it is not for sale at Costco...or Target...or Walgreens or the Pig.

First let's think about what faith is and how we get it...

Often we understand faith as a noun...like a thing...that we can accumulate and put on a shelf for when we need it. A supply...like having enough tp. Faith can be described as a noun. After all, it is a gift that God gives each of us. But that gift is not meant to sit on a shelf. It is meant to be used. And when it is used, it multiplies.

You see, faith is a noun that is also a verb...it is active...and moving...and growing...and changing...and vibrant...and strong...and maybe could use a bit of exercise to make it stronger and slightly more obvious to the rising panic within us right now. So let's practice stretching it and growing it. It will be what you need it to be. It will meet every challenge you face. It will get you through anything. God has made that promise to you.

So...here's the plan to stretch it and strengthen it:

**Pray...**just spill it all out...your fears...your anxieties...your panic...spill it all out to God...as well as your bestie, your spouse, (lucky if they are the same), your mom, your dad, your wise, strong rock person on whom you always depend. When you are telling the human, you are also telling God. There are no secrets. God's got you...use expletives if necessary. We are facing a challenge. It is hard!

**Dance...**to music or silence. Move, groove, and make your body feel alive. Celebrate the miracle your body is. Think of the million things going right within it this actual minute...even if you are feeling something coming on. It will get you through whatever you need to get through.

**Connect...**with those folks who have lived on the periphery of your busy life. Your aunt and uncle in California. Your niece or nephew in New York. Your best friend from childhood who you haven't talked to in ages. The people who know the darkest secrets of your college years. An old prof...or pastor...or teacher...or wise neighbor who pointed you down a great path, your next door neighbor (we checked on ours yesterday—they own the MidTowne pub).

**Watch...**for opportunities to connect with us and each other with cyber tools. We are treating this time like a whole new reality. We are church without the building. We are church wherever we are. We will connect by Zoom for one time learning events...and Bible segment studies...and prayer times. Do you know how to do Centering Prayer? Let's practice together.

Melissa is doing children's messages via FaceBook. We are working on expanding worship ideas. The high school youth will have breakfast club via Zoom.

So, as St. Paul has said...

*Don't fret or worry. Instead of worrying, pray. Let petitions and praises shape your worries into prayers, letting God know your concerns. Before you know it, a sense of God's wholeness, everything coming together for good, will come and settle you down. It's wonderful what happens when Christ displaces worry at the center of your life.*  
*Phil 4:6-7 (The Message)*

Stay safe! Stay sane!

Together in Christ,  
The Peace Team

Prayer: Holy God, we are #\$\$%^ which means a bit afraid. Help us. Give us hope. Heal our hearts and our minds and our lives. Restore the kind of order that allows us to be kind and caring, alive and well, generous and compassionate. We see the need. We hear your voice. We are excited for what might come beyond these days. Amen.

Song of the Day...(thank you Melissa)

[Pat Barrett - Into Faith I Go \(Live\)](#)