



Greetings People,

*How is your faith in all of this?*

A neighbor asked me this question last week. I immediately answered, “well and exhausted.” One does not negate the other.

Faith is seen and unseen. Such as taking our family to offer smiles and hospitality while people are served to-go meals at New York Avenue Presbyterian Church. And accepting the limitations that I cannot visit with folks the way I yearn to. I used to listen closely, so they did not have to yell, and I used to hold hands for personal prayer. The limitations cause me exhaustion.

Faith is like a mustard seed. Like keeping the expectations kind of low on our days of school-at-home and being surprised with the creativity that comes from our children as they navigate the new reality of school. Upholding the boundaries of a day and affirm the spontaneity that cracks through. It is exhausting.

We walk by Faith, not by sight. Thank goodness because guess what, y’all? I am vain about my hair and that sight will be #100! My faith is well. And I am exhausted.

A presence of connectedness is necessary from us now. And it is a kind of presence that was not part of my training. I am not sure, as an extrovert, how I can best offer my gifts?

We can do this. We all are doing this! And we are tired -- maybe of being constantly creative, responsive, and present in ways we have not before. We are tired because we must make different kinds of boundaries.

And yet this is us living into our Faith. Seen, unseen, small, and of hope.

Many colleagues are asking what about Holy Week? How do we do Holy Week and Easter? I am writing this for now: we are in Holy Week. I want rituals that help my children, my colleagues, and our churches let go of those things that don’t work because of a completely changed world. I want to grieve. I want to breathe.

Holy Week is not about a set time, it is about a presence of coming to terms with who we are and where we are. Holy Week is not about multiple services, it is about being reminded that our lives are not of our own making. Our lives are of God. Holy Week is not about palm branches, and shrouded crosses, and brass ensembles. It is about following the One who washes feet, who sacrifices for the sake of others, who asks us to do this in remembrance of him.

None of this is the complete story. Thanks be to God. My faith is present in the connected Body of Christ. No matter what is unseen and no matter how small. I need to stay mindful with others and pace our days. Because the mustard seed does grow into this wild huge bush, shrub, treelike living vessel of hope and life. New life rises out of death.

Peace and Courage,

Tara