



Wednesday Prayer

25th Sunday after Pentecost – Finding ways forward

When he was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked him privately, “Tell us, when will this be, and what will be the sign that all these things are about to be accomplished?” Then Jesus began to say to them, “Beware that no one leads you astray. Many will come in my name and say, ‘I am he!’ and they will lead many astray. When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed; this must take place, but the end is still to come. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places; there will be famines. This is but the beginning of the birthpangs. Mark 13:3-8

Today our LSS Metro Homeless Youth Services leadership team listened to a podcast together titled “Complete the Stress Response Cycle”. It was especially timely as we’re all feeling the effects of the prolonged pandemic in numerous ways, and we’re seeing these effects play out in our own children and families as well as in the young people we serve in our programs. This podcast allowed us to pause and think about how to help our bodies move through the complete stress response cycle – not necessarily *solving for* all the current stresses, as so much is currently outside our control – but how we can find a foothold in our response.

We work to end youth homelessness, we work to prevent child sexual exploitation, we work to create healthy communities – all with the backdrop of our current societal and worldwide issues.

Just as Jesus’ disciples wanted to know what to expect, when, and what signs to watch for, we are all longing for the same. Jesus warns the disciples not to follow anyone or anything that will lead them astray, even when everything seems out of control. Finding ways forward each day together is an important step. I’ve had some youth share with me recently how they are struggling, how they’ve gone down a path that’s led them astray, and how they want to do better. They were not asking me to *solve* their problem, but to listen, encourage, and support their way forward.

The work we do in our homes, churches and communities may offer a young person what they need in order to reach out to a healthy adult when they are hurting rather than becoming the target of an exploiter. Take care to attend to your own stress so that we can be available to young people in our care. None of us can do it all right now, but we can do something.

God of loving care, even when things seem out of control, even when we feel divided, anxious, or fragile, help us to care for ourselves so that we can find a way forward and care for others. Amen.

Listen to “Complete the Stress Response Cycle” by Feminist Survival Podcast, Nov 3, 2019.

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