



APRIL 2023
PRESIDENT'S LETTER

THE NEXT FAITHFUL STEP

The theme and monthly topics for the Christian Education Network were selected last year. It Is Well With My Soul is our yearly theme, and there are monthly topics and spiritual practices featured on our website and newsletter. I would have never predicted a few months ago how the theme of Anxiety would have an influence on my life. I've heard this said in different ways by different people throughout my ministry: Sometimes the sermon you preach is the one you most need to hear. I am writing these words in part to help my own anxiety.

I was recently hospitalized while traveling in Utah. This involved an ambulance ride from a small hospital to a larger one. This experience also involved a lot of tests and a lot of waiting. Tests are common with hospital stays, the added stress was being away from home and being alone for several hours. My husband had to check out suddenly from our hotel and drive to the larger hospital. This was a very anxious time.

I've always drawn a great deal of strength from being in and experiencing nature. My hospital room had a view of the mountains. As I waited for my husband and for test results, I looked out the window continually. I started to think about all the scripture that mentions mountains, and all the hymns that include mountains. These thoughts sustained me during a difficult time of waiting. The more I looked out at the mountains, the less anxious I felt.

The Best Picture Oscar this year was the movie "Everything Everywhere All At Once." Ministry is often like this, many demands and responsibilities, all at the same time. We complete a task or event or program, and then quickly move onto the next one. Our ministries are ministries of presence, of taking the next faithful step, then the next. I was sustained during my anxiety by a view of mountains, and people fully present for me, and good medical care, and prayer and support from family and friends.

Whatever the next faithful step is for you, I hope you draw strength from something in nature, or someone, or a spiritual practice that sustains you. We are called to be present, whatever that means for the person right in front of us, or the program demanding our attention. May our presence joined with the presence of our risen Lord calm the anxiety in our settings.

Our first webinar supporting our theme "It is Well with My Soul" is Managing Anxiety in Post Pandemic Times, on Tuesday April 25 at 8 pm Eastern on Zoom. You can register and view the full webinar description on our website www.faithfulteaching.org.

Taking the next faithful step with you and living into the promise of the resurrection,
Diane McGeoch

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"...that they may be encouraged
in heart and united in love..."

Colossians 2.2 (NIV)