

COME TO THE PICNIC JUNE 14

Episcopalians have a well deserved reputation for dining well and often. A wonderful demonstration of this tendency occurs just after the echoes of the closing hymn of the 10:30 service each Sunday.. so on June 14th eat a light breakfast and prepared to enjoy the food and fellowship ... reservations not needed- just show up!

Ann Hazard kindly provided this insight...

The Springing of Grief

Pierrette Stukes, PhD

Spring in the North Carolina mountains is a bitter, whiplash quarrel among lovers—cobalt skies which shimmer with their infinite promise, hail which spits with angry repudiations, snow covered daffodils which refuse their icy death, rain sheets which whip bare trees and one's reserve, and the sun and last fires which warm chilled souls. I will not begin to garden until May, when the last frost is surely past. Spring is a season for grieving.

Grieving is so utterly private and yet so public. The grief cycle is one of denial, anger, bargaining, mourning, and acceptance. One cannot say to someone who is caught in a cycle of denial, anger, and bargaining that she needs to move on, let go. Soul-self whispers to soul-self alone in the quiet stillness of night dreams and grace's happenings. Only the holy's gracious scent moves us to push through to the "solid rock" of mourning.

In mourning, our wounded selves are exposed, not through incessant talk or stoic reserve, but because we cannot but wear our tender collapse on brailed skin for others to touch. Our masks have fallen away. We cannot but do this; for grieving must consume the self so that those around no longer know us. The price for authenticity is total surrender.

I am in mourning. Everything that I have held dear and cherished, coddled in brisk denial, hostile recriminations, and subtle calculations, has shattered. I am moving with the rhythm of one who is dying, or whose loved one is dying, and there is no hope of resurrection. There is no way around death, I see now. We must walk through "massive darkness" at moments along our journey and in the end. In whatever shaded form death comes, when we grieve, we know in our deepest, wounded center, that death is coming, has come, will come.

Hope is a sentiment we share among us like candy to assuage our growling souls. I have learned these fall and winter months that hope is the fertile gift of grieving, of letting go thoroughly with all of one's self into the void of the soul. Resurrection is the fruit of death, not life. Resurrection follows our deepest acceptance of all that never was and never will be, of all that was lost and all that will not be found.

Life is a journey of grievings. No one shared this greatest lesson of life with me, but I share it with you. I am surviving. Lean into your grievings and know that life follows death.