

12/19/25

Happy Friday, Y'all.

It's been several weeks since I've done a hope inspiring Happy Friday post (no reason really, just haven't). But I need to generate hope today so here we are.

I'm saying Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays loudly these days because of the hope it fosters. Hope in the midst of the anger and hate so prevalent in our country right now is a defiant stand! When we choose to be happy and look for joy in our interactions and relationships with others, we are standing against those who want to bury us with fear. When someone is always telling you what you should be afraid of, they are trying to control your thinking. They aren't trying to help you and they do not have your best interest at heart. God always sends his messengers with the hope of 'do not be afraid.'

And yet we can't ignore the reality of our world. But we must let Jesus form our response and stance. The war against immigrants in this country breaks my heart. The current administration has demonized all immigrants without considering who in their families are immigrants or even the fact that unless you are 100% native American, your family immigrated here at some point - some by choice, some by necessity, some by force. Several generations ago my parents' families came from the German and French areas of Europe. My husband was from Canada. I was born on foreign soil to American citizen parents and that birthplace is listed in my passport.

Earlier this week, the president issued orders to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services field offices to supply the Office of Immigration Litigation with 100-200 denaturalization cases per month in 2026. That order will disrupt 100-200 LIVES per month. In the previous 8 years, only 120 cases of immigration fraud have been brought to litigation. Now, they have to find a minimum of 100 per month. So if they can't find that number of legitimate fraud cases - because real data shows they haven't existed before and most likely don't now - what are they going to do to fulfill the quota?

The justification is to uncover fraud, which, yes, should be done. Those who intentionally misrepresented themselves to obtain citizenship should be held accountable. Again, real historical data shows this is a minuscule number. Of the over six million people granted citizenship over the past eight years, only 120 have been proven to do so with intentional fraud. But what about those who unintentionally made an error? What about those who had their paperwork messed up by the system itself?

I fall in that category. I've told this story here before: when my parents filed the paperwork to report a child born to American Citizens abroad, the US Consulate misplaced the paperwork and my citizenship wasn't recorded. I was in my 30s before we knew that. The State Department owned up, searched for and found the paperwork and finally filed it so that I have a valid certificate of citizenship but the dates on it and the year it was actually signed are 30+ years apart. It looks, on the surface, sketchy. Eventually, if this isn't stopped, this mining for 100-200 cases a month will uncover mine. And while this hunt is allowed to proceed, hundreds of thousands of people will be treated without dignity and respect and with no due process of law. Justice will not be done.

When the order is to find a set number of fraudulent cases, the humanity is lost in the system now designed to harm. When fear becomes the driving force humanity is lost. Innocent people are swept up in the furor. When we lump people into these sweeping categories and label them all as bad, we are losing a part of our own humanity as we deny the humanity of our fellow humans. And when an administration who refuses to admit to any wrongdoing and operates so aggressively against groups of human beings is calling the shots it's hard not to be afraid.

So, I hear God say “do not be afraid. Do not let fear guide you but love.” And I stand in the defiant hope of God’s love for all people. We are all made in the image of the Loving God who relentlessly pursues us in LOVE.

Do not be afraid and keep lovin’ louder than the hate.

11/21/25

Happy Friday, Y’all.

I haven’t asked in a while: how are you? Really, how are you? I seem to have a permanent tummy-ache because of the dehumanizing rhetoric that has become the norm of our national scene.

I was having a conversation with some folks last evening about the current state of affairs and at one point a wise woman said, “let’s all take a breath.” We did pause and inhale and then we all laughed. We weren’t arguing amongst ourselves. No one in the room was trying to dominate the conversation or prove themselves right. We were all in agreement about the shameful behavior of our current president but we were getting worked up. And as we wrapped up this conversation we agreed that we can’t participate in the normalization of the bullying behavior we see demonstrated by the leader of our country.

Now, yes, in this group, we agreed. But if we hadn’t I can’t imagine that any of us would devolve into name-calling, humiliation, or dehumanizing each other. No one would have tried to silence any one else. The gist of our discussion was how and why people think this is ok. We couldn’t come up with an answer. But because it’s being modeled at the highest level others take that as permission to do the same. To insult a reporter for doing their job instead of simply int saying “I won’t answer that”; to excuse the murder of another because they “weren’t a very good guy”; to call insults “frankness”; to threaten death as punishment for disagreement; and to attempt to downplay the sexual assault of children by calling them “underage women” should never feel normal or ok. Because none of this is ok.

Simply as humans we should be appalled. If we claim to follow Jesus it should break our hearts that human beings, beloved children of God made in God’s image would treat a fellow human being, beloved child of God made in the image of God in such a manner.

When we excuse or ignore it at the highest levels, this behavior becomes acceptable at all levels of our society. And to say things like “well, he does some good things, too” or “he’s better than the other candidate” should never be used to excuse bad behavior, whether they are the president, our neighbor, a church leader, a civic leader, or ourselves. A person’s regular patterns of observable behavior that continue to belittle, diminish, and devalue other human beings should never be tolerated for any reason. We must call it out for what it is and we can do this in ways that don’t belittle, diminish, and devalue the person whom we are holding accountable. Because if we attempt to dehumanize them we are stepping into the same dangerous territory. And if we let their behavior slide we are participating in the belittling, diminishing, and devaluing of others.

The best solution I have is to keep our eyes on Jesus and let his teaching and love and stories and way of living and being be our model. The Good News of the God of Love is the lens through which we see each others, ourselves, and the world. “From now on, brothers and sisters, if anything is excellent and if anything is admirable, focus your thoughts on these things: all that is true, all that is holy, all that is just, all that is pure, all that is lovely, and all that

is worthy of praise. Practice these things: whatever you learned, received, heard, or saw in us. The God of peace will be with you.” (Philippians 4:8-9)

Keep lovin' louder than the hate.

11/14/25

Happy Friday, Y'all.

In his letter to the church in Galatia, Paul is addressing a gathering of folks newly converted to the The Way of Jesus. They lived in a culture that had blended various ancient religions along with their modern imperial cult (worshiping the emperor). Paul begins his letter to them by scolding them for straying from the true gospel of Jesus in their life and practices and reminds them that true freedom comes from living by the Spirit and living by the Spirit means to love your neighbor as yourself.

This is the letter where we get the Fruit of the Spirit: Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Generosity, Faithfulness, Gentleness, and Self-Control. When we follow Jesus, when we live by the Spirit, our lives will bear this fruit. This is the litmus test. If how we are living doesn't look like this, we have to stop and ask just who are we following? Paul goes on to tell them not to give up, to not grow weary in doing right and that whenever, WHENEVER, we have the opportunity to do good for all.

So, let Paul's words be my words to you today. Live is hard and it feels like the good we do, the love we share, really isn't changing much. People are still hateful and hurtful. Some folks are going to great lengths to maintain the emperor's image as good even as the evidence in front of us says otherwise. Those who preach compassion and kindness are at best called irrelevant and at worst punished. It is challenging to name the harm we see without being harmful ourselves but holding others accountable is not harm, it's justice. We cannot let our desire for justice devolve into revenge or retaliation or we become like those we are calling out.

We know the truth - that our purpose in this life is to do good for all, to love God and our neighbors and ourselves, to want for our neighbors what we want for ourselves and to do all we are able to bring that about. Don't give up. Don't be afraid. Hold tight to one another. Keep speaking out.

Keep lovin' louder than the hate.

11/07/2025

Happy Friday, Y'all

Do you know the British TV show Professor T? It is soooooo good. I use a quote from Professor T in my email signature: "To pretend to know what we do not know is unhealthy; it is a recipe for insanity." This rings true as I watch those who support our current president try to justify the abuse and violence he perpetuates with his bullying. They will go to enormous semantic lengths to avoid saying anything negative about him or that sounds as if he's being held accountable as a leader. It truly boggles my mind.

Our president is holding American families hostage, intentionally ignoring court orders and refusing to accept a leader's responsibility. And his supporters are pretending not to know this. It appears as if many in this country have lost their ability to see the truth right in front of them in his words and actions. It makes my brain hurt and my heart break.

Our fellow human beings are suffering. Children and older folks and vulnerable people do not have food in their homes. People don't have money to put gas in their car because their child or elderly parent needed medications. So many in this country are showing up for work knowing they won't get a paycheck because our president is more concerned with literally gilding the White House and throwing parties than he is with caring for the people of this

country he was supposed to be elected to serve. We cannot pretend this isn't happening. To do so causes grave harm to our own hearts and souls.

So, together, let's provide some glimmer of hope to those who are the victims of his abuse. With whatever extra we have, donate to your food pantry. Buy as much extra shelf stable, good quality food stuffs as you can when you make your own grocery run this week and give it to the food pantry. Create a 'take and give' food station in your neighborhood or at your church where folks can drop off what they have to share and take what they need. Ask your local school admin or PTA if you can help them set up a food station there. Don't forget things like diapers and personal hygiene items. Buy grocery store and gas station gift cards and take them to the churches in your area so they can hand them out.

To love our neighbors as ourselves we must want for our neighbors what we want for ourselves. Families trying to stretch their paychecks to meet the high cost of living in this country isn't the problem. The problem is that some have decided that the purpose of life is to accumulate as much wealth as possible. Jesus shows us in flesh and blood that life is about being in relationship with God and each other. As we follow Jesus, we pray for the eyes to see and ears to hear the reality of those who are in need and do what we can to help alleviate their suffering and in doing so our own souls are strengthened and healed.

We keep lovin' louder than the hate.

10/31/05

Happy Friday, Y'all

I'm home from a couple of weeks across the pond. Traveling and experiencing the cultures of other countries is so amazing to me and I do think it helps us be better humans. In the small bit of England that I traveled, I can say that everyone I encountered was kind. Without exception.

If they discovered I was American, they would ask if things were as frightening in the US as it seemed - are things really that violent, has the government really taken healthcare and food away from children, are women and others really losing their rights, do we really hate immigrants? It made me sad that this is the image we are now offering to the world. I would tell them that I think most Americans are still kind and compassionate. It is our president and his supporters that are willing to be so hateful and hurtful. I had a lovely conversation with one lady on the plane on my way home where we shared ways we can help alleviate the suffering and look out for each other in our communities.

Tomorrow many families who rely on SNAP benefits to ensure their children have food won't be getting them. I've seen some social media posts that try to shame the parents telling them to get a job and it just makes my heart sick. This isn't about people sitting around demanding the government pay their bills. It's about families whose jobs don't pay a livable wage. Even \$10 per hour (above minimum wage) for a 40 hour a week job is only \$400 a week or about \$1600 a month. Both parents working this is \$3200, minus taxes, rent, health insurance, car and gas, day care or afterschool care, utilities, and groceries, etc., I dare anyone to try and make ends meet. And, just to be clear, there are work requirements to receive SNAP (supplemental nutrition assistance program).

Without SNAP children (and some veterans, elderly, and disabled) will not have enough nutrition. So, instead of justifying selfishness by saying they just need to get a job, put yourself in their shoes.

And then put on your shoes and go to the grocery store and buy as much as you can for your local food pantry because that will be how we keep children fed.

Here's some helpful hints:

Hamburger helper doesn't help without the ground beef to go with it.

Mac and cheese needs butter and milk so get the kind that comes with the cheese sauce not the powder.

Peanut butter and jelly need bread or even crackers. My son's favorite way to eat PB&J as a kid was on saltines!

Buy shelf stable almond or oat milk to go with the cereal.

Don't buy the cheapest you can find. If you wouldn't buy it for yourself, why is it 'good enough' for others? Many store brands are very good and more affordable. Just remember to want for your neighbors what you want for yourself.

Offer to be a food pantry drop off location for your neighborhood and hand out flyers and lists to the parents with trick or treaters tonight. Make it a weekly thing and ask your neighbors to take turns running the weekly collection to the food pantry. And then write and call your congressional representatives. Show up for the peaceful protests. Keep lovin' louder than the hate.

10/10/25

Happy Friday, Y'all

Sometimes I have to ask myself if I'm still in the 21st century or did I accidentally touch a stone that propelled me back in time a few hundred years and am living my own version of Outlander. A week ago the new Archbishop of Canterbury was announced. Her name is Sarah Mullally. I was so excited to hear the news. But then stories started coming out about how all of the so called conservative bishops around the world are angry because King Charles appointed a woman to the post that is the ceremonial head of the Anglican Communion. Some have even begun to break away from the Anglican Communion.

So, I ask, just what are they trying to conserve in their conservativeness? It isn't the idea of unity in Christ or that all people are created in God's image. It isn't love. The only thing they are trying to conserve is their own power. This is the same issue we have in the US right now. The men who are in power think only they know how to wield power yet the country is falling apart and they can't admit the way they view the world and the people in it, the way they attempt to lead is the problem.

This "I'm in charge because I'm male/have a certain skin color/rich/have a certain title or job/already in power" mentality has absolutely nothing to do with Jesus. Leading from the mindset "I know what's best for everyone" isn't leading, it's control. Properly translated, it really means, "I only want what's best for me and will use all of you to get what I want."

To lead as Jesus shows us in flesh and blood how to lead requires that we check our egos at the Kingdom gates, that we want for everyone what we want for ourselves. Digging our heels in and attempting to maintain the status quo prevents us from following. We must be willing to follow and to continuously be transformed and shaped by the power of God's Love for all people. And I'm not saying we need change for the sake of change but that we need to be willing to grow and more often than not our growth comes from what we get wrong rather than what we get right.

It is domineering, coercive, controlling so-called leadership that marginalizes and oppresses other people, that creates the massive cavern between 'the have and have nots', that divides and brings about pain and suffering. This false leadership rules with fear not love and it is not of God.

I know that my little voice speaking out from the hill country of Texas isn't going to change the minds of those in power, but I can do the work in my own self so that I'm open to the continuous transformation of my own heart. I can work at leading with love as I follow Jesus and I can equip and empower others to do the same. So, I'm back to being excited and hopeful to journey the Kingdom road along with Archbishop Sarah Mullally and I'm inspired by the Nobel committee's announcement of Maria Corina Machado as the recipient of the Peace

Prize. And I pray that these women and others like them continue to have the courage to speak and lead in a way that makes us all better humans. Some days we have to look hard for hope and encouragement and when we look we will always find it.

Keep lovin' louder than the hate!

10/3/2025

Happy Friday, Y'all

In my FB memories this morning popped up something I wrote 8 years ago, before COVID, before I even started my blog (mothernancyscoffeethoughts): "Our job isn't to fix the world. Our job is to shine the light of God's kingdom into the chaos of this world, to live on earth as it is in heaven even when we can't see where to go. Our job is to help others walk in the way of Jesus, to show that the path of kindness and peace and compassion isn't really lost or broken, just difficult to see in the midst of those living in anger and greed and envy and violence. In the midst of the chaos that the ways of this world cause, the light we bear breaks through the cracks and heals the darkness one tiny spark at a time. One heart at a time. One kind, compassionate, loving act at a time. We can't fix the world, we aren't supposed to, it isn't our job. Our job is to shine God's light where we are and illuminate the path of love so that others can choose follow the light through the darkness."

We can't pretend that pain and suffering don't exist. Y'all know I don't do toxic positivity. We see the hurt and we move toward it with the light of God's love. And when our own pain and suffering makes our life so foggy that we struggle to see the light ourselves, we need others to see us and hear us and hold onto us.

Here's another memory - do y'all remember the book All I really need to know I learned in Kindergarten? One of the things from that book that has always stuck with me is "when you go out into the world, watch out for traffic, hold hands, and stick together." Years ago, on an average day at a parish, I was watching the preschoolers make their way to the library and the teachers were trying one of those 'line ropes' that connected each child to help them walk in a straight line. And despite that rope, the children still held hands with the one in front and the one behind them. A few days later I saw the same class walking, holding hands, without the line rope. I asked the teacher about it and she said she thought the rope would make things easier but they never stopped holding hands so she put it away.

There are so many reasons why Jesus tells us to be like children and I think one of the most important ones is that children haven't yet forgotten that they need each other, not just to 'do stuff' but to just be with each other, holding hands despite what others may say is a more helpful means to move through the world. We need to be with each other, without trying to prove ourselves or fix others, to be who God made and calls us to be.

I pray you have a hand to hold as you go out into traffic today and if you need a hand to hold, let me know. There's much chaos and the fog is thick. We must stick together and remember the light of God's love is stronger than the darkness and it shines in us and for us all.

Keep lovin' louder than the hate, Y'all!

9/26/2025

Happy Friday, Y'all

How are you? Really, how are you? How are you coping with this mixed up mess of a wonderful world we are in? Do you try to pretend the bad stuff doesn't exist and block it out. Do you see only the bad stuff and feel overwhelmed. Are you wandering somewhere in between or are you intentionally walking in the tension of it all noticing where you feel God's presence and where you don't?

Wherever you are, however you are feeling, I pray you are able to ground yourself in the love of God that is the image of God at the core of who we all are. In his letter to the people of Colossae, Paul offers these words, "As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue to walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving. Watch out that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to human tradition, according to the elemental principles of the world, and not according to Christ. For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have come to fullness in him."

To be human in this world means we live in tension (not stress) - the tension of the now and not yet of God's Kingdom-on-earth-as-in-heaven. Jesus tells us the Kingdom is at hand and shows us in flesh and blood how to live in the now as if the not yet were fully realized. We live in the tension of continuing to be kind and compassionate even as it seems evil is taking over. We live in the tension of speaking the truth even as some refuse to listen or even try to silence us. We live in the tension of knowing we are made in the divine image with all of our human limitations.

We live in the tension of being responsible and accountable for our own behaviors because we know that we can only control ourselves and being responsible for each other's wellbeing because we are bound together as children of God.

We live in the tension of hope trusting in God's promise to set all things to right someday (at a day of God's choosing, not ours) and knowing what is ours to do to reveal Kingdom righteousness here and now.

Even in these tensions, we are grounded. We are grounded in God's infinite love for us all. This is where and how we have the courage and strength to be kind, to offer empathy, to speak the truth, to face the truth when we come to know we're wrong, to be grateful without being toxically positive, to discern the line between justice and revenge.

My prayer for all of us is that we, by the gift of God's presence, have ears to hear and eyes to see what is truth in this now and not yet world. The truth of God's love is the greatest power there is.

Keep lovin' louder than the hate.

09/19/2025

Happy Friday, Y'all.

I don't know about you but I am exhausted by the extremes our culture is telling us we have to live in. So, here's some very Good News: Jesus doesn't call us to live in the extremes. God did not make us to live in the extremes. Living from the extremes seeking to take down the other extreme is not the Jesus way. This is not the life we are made for and we can choose not to live in the extremes.

Neither the right nor the left political extremes are how Jesus shows us to live. Jesus shows us the way of Love. And there is no room in love for hate filled extremes.

We are made for and called to live in the "and".

When we choose to follow Jesus we choose to live in the "and."

I am called to love my neighbor AND my enemy.

I believe that ALL people are created in God's image.

No person is wholly good or wholly bad. We are all human and we are made to live in community with God AND Others AND ourselves.

Here's an example of extremes brought toward the middle.

Charlie Kirk did not deserve to be murdered. No human being does. All human life is way invaluable. No death of any human being should be celebrated.

AND

Charlie Kirk said things that promoted racism and misogyny. Regardless of who says things that cause us to marginalize and hate others or how they say it, it is wrong.

To accurately quote what Kirk has said is not an attack, it is acknowledging the truth with an open heart and mind so that we can all consider our own biases that stop us from seeing the image of God in all people.

To place yourself above others because of the color of your skin and the body parts you have is absolutely not in line with the teachings of Jesus.

Hate is not a Christian virtue.

Domination is not a Christian virtue.

Oppression is not a Christian virtue.

Threats are not a Christian virtue.

Dehumanizing groups of people is not a Christian virtue.

Intentional harm is not a Christian Virtue.

If the group you are part of seeks to silence others by any means necessary you cannot also claim to follow Jesus because this is not the Way of Jesus. This is not the Way of Love.

G.K. Chesterton (of Father Brown Mysteries fame) said, "The Bible tells us to love our neighbors, and also to love our enemies; probably because they are generally the same people."

Jesus invites all of us to step into the AND so that we we follow him into the Way of Love. Let's Love louder than the hate.

09/12/2025

Happy Friday, Y'all.

Again, that is an expression of hope. Peace is so illusive right now. It feels like the whole world is in turmoil. I was talking with a family member the other evening and it just seems that everyone one we know is having personal and family crises and struggles. Does it feel that way to you?

The thought that kept coming to me this week is the difficulty with trying to experience peace is we have to come to grips with knowing the difference between 'peacekeeping' and 'peacemaking'. Jesus says "happy are the peaceMAKERS." The Peace of God's Kingdom-on-earth-as-in-heaven is a journey not a static state.

Peacekeeping is artificial and temporary. Peacekeeping is about keeping control and maintaining power. We can pretend all is well but not addressing the reality that life has conflicts doesn't solve the conflicts. Peacekeeping doesn't address bad behavior or abuse or harm; it sweeps it under the rug and pretends. Peacekeeping says 'I'll let you speak your opinion but only so I can prove to you and everyone else that I'm right.' Peacekeeping is blind and deaf.

Peacemaking sees both the humanity and the divine image within of every person. Peacemaking has ears to hear the other with an open heart and open mind. Leo Tolstoy said "If you feel pain, you're alive. If you feel other people's pain you're a human being." Peacemaking sees the harm being done and seeks to alleviate it with accountability, mercy, compassion. Peacemaking brings about justice. Peacemaking enables everyone to be seen and heard and loved.

To love as Jesus shows us in flesh and blood how we are to love, brings about the peace of God's Kingdom-on-earth-as-in-heaven. And this peace enables us to see the hope of God's promises and encourages and strengthens us to keep loving louder than the hate.

Love Y'all!

09/05/25

Happy Friday, Y'all.

And I say that not because I'm necessarily 'happy' but in an expression of hope and to encourage us all. I am both disheartened and encouraged by what's played out this week: survivors of a horrific, worldwide sex trafficking cabal speak out with courage and strength. How can anyone not believe them, not listen to them simply because the men they name and want to hold accountable are in positions of power?

When we speak the truth of another person's harmful actions, we are not being 'mean'. We are speaking the truth. To ask for accountability isn't retaliation, it is seeking justice. To stay neutral or silent is to ignore that harm has been done and is self-serving rather than being other-focused.

When we are truly being the 'bigger person' we hold others accountable for the harm they caused AND we do our best with God's help to not let our quest for justice devolve into revenge. We cannot dehumanize the one who caused harm as they've dehumanized the victim. Holding others accountable is accepting their full humanness. Let's work on what it is to be fully human rather than demanding victims be the bigger person.

So, we let our anger give us the courage to see ourselves and others as God's beloved so that we have the eyes to see them not as scary but as scared. When others hold power over us it is a false power, it is a fragile power. Holding power over others is not the Way of Jesus. It is not the Way of Love.

And we must keep lovin' louder than the hate.

08/29/25

Happy Friday, Y'all!

Another week of challenges. One of the most challenging challenges for me is the balance of gratitude, encouragement, and honestly and authentically naming the pain in this world. I don't do what some have labeled 'toxic positivity'. I don't pretend all is well when it isn't. I do try with God's help to always balance the honest assessment of the pain with the courage I get from grounding my identity in the image of God within.

We see what's going on in our country, in the world, and in our individual lives and it is so hard at time to not believe that evil is winning. Those with power lord it over others and are willing to cause harm for their own gain. This is the exact opposite of how Jesus shows us life in God's Kingdom is. And, Jesus invites all of us to journey into the Kingdom-on-earth-as-in-heaven with him. This is where we find the strength to keep loving louder than the hate.

We can't give up. Name the pain. Name the suffering. Name those being harmed. Name those causing the harm.

When we feel ourselves shrinking because evil feels so big, we take up all the space we are supposed to by following Jesus.

When we feel like being silent because evil is so loud, we find our voice in it's fullness by following Jesus.

When we want to stop and hide, we find the strength to keep on by following Jesus.

And if you need a reminder: you are loved, you are enough, you are a beautiful child of our loving God. I see you. I hear you. I give a damn.

Keep lovin' louder than the hate, Y'all.

08/22/25

Happy Friday Y'all!

It's been a long week. So many of you are starting and settling into school-year routines. I like routine to keep me grounded. And I know routine keeping can reach extremes. In the ancient days when I taught corporate classes on time management and how to use your fancy paper planners, I found myself in that extreme. I could plan the fun out of anything. I had to learn to hold my schedules and expectations more lightly. I've heard it said that if I never expected anything that I would never be disappointed and I think there is a small bit of truth in that. And I also think it isn't always congruent with living in connection with and interdependent with each other, the way God made us and the Way Jesus shows us how to live.

It's ok to expect to be treated well, to be treated with dignity and mutuality. And it's ok to speak up when we aren't. And to be willing to hear it when we are the one who isn't treating others with dignity and mutuality. When our expectations of equity aren't met we manage that expectation with the understanding that when others treat us poorly it does not define who we are. And then let go of the expectation that particular person or group of people are willing to treat us with dignity and mutuality.

As I watch so many in our country and our country's leadership behave without any inclination toward dignity or mutuality or equity, I'm frightened. These are expectations I don't want to let go of. Every human being deserves to be treated with dignity because every human being is made in the Image of our Loving God.

Keep lovin' louder than the hate, Y'all!

08/15/25

Happy Friday, Y'all!

It's been back to school week for many. My heart delights in the pictures of my grandkids on their first day of this annual adventure. I think of the parents who send them off in hope and prayer that it will be a positive time and who do their best to guide and nurture these precious lives. As parents we live in the tension of raising them to go out into this world and the reluctance to let them go. I think of the teachers who have quite possibly the most challenging job on the planet to step into a room full of little people, honoring each as they are and leading them all to learn and grow in an environment that offers you less and less freedom to do what it is you have given your lives to do.

And as I watch all of this from the sideline that comes with my season in life I reflect on my belief that all of life on this amazing, created-for-life planet is to be a journey of growth and learning. Regardless of our age or season of life, we thrive best when we are in a continual mindset of learning and curiosity. So much of the struggles in this world are caused by the

false belief that we can be certain or the one who knows it all or give our allegiance to others who claim these things.

As Jesus gave his last bits of wisdom to his disciples, he didn't tell them 'you've made it' or 'you've graduated'. Jesus told them to continue on the with-others journey into the world to light the path for others to find their way into the Kingdom-on-earth-as-in-heaven. Following Jesus means we keep learning, keep growing, keeping striving to be who and Whose we are.

Keep being curious and keep learning and most importantly, keep loving louder than the hate, y'all.

08/08/25

Happy Friday, Y'all! How's your coffee (or tea or beverage of choice, no judging)?

My favorite feeling is to be settled and comfortable. If one of your spiritual wisdom tools is the enneagram, you will know that's typical of the nine archetype. But sometimes my need to speak the truth is stronger than my need for comfort because I've learned the life lesson that being silent to maintain my comfort zone isn't how Jesus teaches us to bring about peace in this world. True peace, real peace, the kingdom-on-earth-as-in-heaven peace requires that we confront injustice and those causing harm. There are many ways to do this of course, but we must do it however best we each are able. Loving our neighbor isn't always comfortable. Jesus never said it would be. He just said to do it.

Keep loving louder than the hate, Y'all!

08/01/25

Happy Friday, Y'all,

I'll mostly let the memes speak for themselves today. We all face the challenge of navigating this complicated world and I encourage you to speak what you know to be true, take the space that is yours to take up, and don't let the fear distract you from loving louder than the hate.

07/25/25

Happy Friday, Y'all!

I've been doing this very large craft project in my living room in which with one small bead at a time I'm turning a 5ft square window into a distant cousin of a stained glass window. It's a slow, steady process of transformation and with each new row completed the morning sun sprinkles more and more colored light across my living room. At times I wonder if I'll ever finish it and then I see the beauty and I'm content with the progress.

As I sit here with my coffee enjoying the beauty of the work in progress and speaking my prayers to our loving God who knows us all as a beautiful work in progress, I ask what it is I am to be doing to sprinkle the beauty of God's love in this time and place of a country that is currently being led by ugly hate and secrets and disregard for the protection and care of our fellow humans.

The most recent events of so many in our government trying to coverup the guilt with lies to protect one man's false reputation at the expense of the dignity of every person, child or adult, who's ever been a victim of abuse and exploitation, turn my stomach and break my heart. I feel helpless and scared about what could be next if so many are willing to put up with this as the status quo.

As the sun makes its way across the window and new patterns of color appear, I am given a glimmer of hope. I pray big prayers for the leaders of our country that their hearts will be turned to love. I write those in congress and the house again and again and again. And I

sprinkle kindness and love like the specks of light across my living room knowing there will be more and more to share the more I share. That's how kindness and love work.

Here's my week in memes and a picture of my dog staring down the neighborhood cat through the window in progress. I love you all and am grateful you are journeying with me. Keep loving louder than the hate.