

Spiritual Practices during a Pandemic

A 5 week study offered for adults at Unity Presbyterian Church

Week 2: Peace

[Phillipians 4:6-9](#)

At the end of Children in Worship each week, the children sing this benediction, “Go now in peace, Go now in peace, May the love of God surround you, everywhere, everywhere, you may go.” How do we live in peace, especially right now while there is so much uncertainty, fear, and anxiety in our world and the places we can even go are so limited?! John 14:27 says, “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.” This passage reminds us that Jesus gave us the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, to be with us always, so that when we are afraid, uncertain, and fearful, we can turn to God, the Holy Spirit and Comforter, and be reminded that we are not alone in this unknown. Being reminded of that helps us shift from being stuck in worry and helplessness to an inner peace that trusts in the almighty God to take care of us, no matter what.

Experience:

Listen to [this podcast](#) between Grace Bell, an educator who teaches people a process of turning their self-talk about stressful situations around to find inner peace, and a woman who is a professional therapist struggling with the stress this pandemic is causing her both personally and professionally. While we are not all professional therapists, I think many of us will identify with some of her feelings related to the virus. Grace Bell uses a process, created by Byron Katie, to rethink her inner self-talk and come to a place of peace.

Here is a [blog post](#) with videos and resources outlining every step of the process Grace Bell used with her guest during the podcast.

Listen to the beautiful rendition of this hymn: *It is Well with My Soul* sung by TenTwoSix Music Group (an online cell phone choir in Nashville)

Reflect & Discuss:

1. While not overtly religious in nature, how can using the process Grace Bell used with her guest in the podcast remind you to hand your worry about what you can't control to God and be at peace with what you can control?
2. Grace Bell's guest says, “There's a sweetness in that waking up to ‘I am a person who is aware and appreciative of the fact that this is a gift - this day, this sunshine, this non-presence of illness in my body in this moment’, even as many of my brothers and sisters are.” How can we hold both the gratitude that comes from recognizing the gifts we do have right now and the grief over what is going on in our world right now? Does finding the balance for both emotions help bring you peace?

3. Grace Bell asks her guest, “Who would you be without the story, ‘The virus is making me lose my mooring?’” Who would you be without this experience? What have you learned? Does recognizing what you’ve learned help bring you peace? Why or why not?
4. Grace Bell’s guest says, “The virus has reminded me to share my gifts with my friends, my family and myself.” What has it reminded you to do?
5. Grace Bell’s guest says the virus has helped her in “gaining my ‘not knowing mind.’” Can you find peace in the not knowing? What makes that possible or difficult for you?
6. Grace invites her guest to complete the sentences, “I look forward to... or “I welcome...” How would you complete those sentences? Does thinking about those things help bring you a sense of peace?
7. Grace Bell and her guest talk about so much of the exhaustion we often feel coming from thinking this shouldn’t be happening and “being bogged down in fear.” How do these feelings cause anxiety and keep us from being at peace? What helps you turn that thinking around?
8. What scripture do you turn to in uncertain times to help you find peace?