

A Prayer for Letting Go
October 11, 2020
Rev. Patricia Wagner

Matthew 11: 28-30

Come unto me all of you who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and lowly of heart. My yoke is easy and my burden is light.

There is no more beautiful passage in the Gospels than this. No one that speaks more to our condition, for we are tired.

Tired of politicians and pundits setting us on each other
We are tired of being ready to explode in anger
Tired of injustice and white supremacists, and gunfire.
Tired of not being able to see people we care about.
Tired of holding on, trying to make things normal

And it seems that Jesus is inviting us to lay down our arms, our judgments, our burdens to let them go.

I'm reading this book: *Raising a Rare Girl*

Heather Lanier gave birth to a child, a girl, Fiona with a short 4th chromosome, which made Fiona fall off the "normal" chart.

Heather wrestled with her child's life and her own life, not being what she had planned for it to be. *I didn't sign up for this*, she thought. And that's what we say, too, about our own lives, all the ways in which life is not what it's supposed to be, particularly this year.

But in a way, by virtue of the gift of being born, *we did sign up for this, says Heather, for precarious vulnerability of being human. We just don't always know it or act like we do.*

This year seems damaged and one doctor described Fiona as "damaged goods". And of course, in a way she was. Every one of her cells was missing part of the 4th chromosome.

But once Heather stopped holding onto the life she thought she was supposed to have, the daughter she was supposed to have, the life her daughter was supposed to lead, she realized that her daughter was capable of experiencing love and the divine. *She's good and she's whole and she's holy.*

This seems like a damaged year, and you may seem damaged, too. I heard someone say this on the radio: *You hold the life you didn't have against yourself, but the call is to practice self-forgiveness so that you can love the life you have.*

In the words of a 14th century monk Meister Eckhard: *Let go of all things so you can embrace all things so you can let God be in you.* Heather did that with Fiona. Jesus seems to be inviting us to do the same.

Come to me, all of you who are weary and heavy laden, I will give you rest. Lay down your burden, he says. Let go, open up, clear a path, so that you can embrace what I have for you, all the new possibilities.

Take my yoke upon you, allow yourself to be tied only to divine love that is as close as breath, right there in the silence. And my burden, won't make you weary, it won't weigh you down. It will lift you up. It will let you lift others in Jesus name. Amen.