

Breathe – A Reflection for April 2

By Barbara Certa-Werner

"The Spirit of God has made me, And the breath of the Almighty gives me life." Job 33:4

In the last two weeks, ZOOM has become my new best friend! I have participated in most of my ZOOM meetings in a Sunday school room that has a white board with this quote, "I was recently told that every sigh is a prayer". Whew, I felt that. I have indeed been sighing quite often. I have intentionally offered those exhales as a prayer, which is the best way for me to give God my anxiety, my heart-break, and my fears.

I have also noticed that I needed to take some deep breaths, reminding myself to take pause and embrace what I am feeling and thinking. It has helped me to move towards more connectedness to God and to who God has called me to be in life and ministry. These breathe prayers have been a soul enriching time of stillness and being while facing so much chaos swirling around me.

Prior to this pandemic, many of us did not have time nor make time to engage in prayer sighs, let alone, deep breaths as prayer. We lived in a fast pace, results driven world that had no room for pauses of breath, inspiration, God-connections. We have spent our time trying to achieve and not fall behind.

Folks, here is our moment, to embrace this time, as much as we can for as long as we can, to connect with God and each other in new ways. I invite you to explore who God has created you to be; discover new ways of connectedness to God and to each other; and spend time breathing in God's Spirit.

As inspiration for you and as a prayer, here is a link to Jonny Diaz singing, Breathe: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hnjeMwxFuBA> .

Alarm clock screaming bare feet hit the floor
It's off to the races everybody out the door
I'm feeling like I'm falling behind, it's a crazy life
Ninety miles an hour going fast as I can
Trying to push a little harder trying to get the upper hand
So much to do in so little time, it's a crazy life
It's ready, set, go it's another wild day
When the stress is on the rise in my heart I feel you say just
Breathe, just breathe
Come and rest at my feet
And be, just be
Chaos calls but all you really need
Is to just breathe
Third cup of joe just to get me through the day
Want to make the most of time but I feel it slip away

I wonder if there's something more to this crazy life
I'm busy, busy, busy, and it's no surprise to see
That I only have time for me, me, me - "Breathe" by Jonny Diaz

Amen.

With all the turmoil whirling around us in response to the COVID-19 virus pandemic, many of us are caught up in anxiety and worry. Plus, in the church, we are working full time to make plans to care for others who are struggling, to change how we worship and offer connection virtually or through phone calls and emails, and we are caring for people we love in our own families and connections. We are inundated with emails and posts and calls and news giving us latest reports and ideas for ways to respond and mis-information and latest information about healthy protections. We wonder what will happen to our churches and finances. Many of us are overloaded and overwhelmed.

In the midst of all of this, there are people reaching out to make a difference, offering generous care to neighbors and community, posting positive life-giving reflections and being the best of who we can be as individuals and as communities of faith. Thank you for all you are doing. We are collecting your stories and ideas and posting them on our conference website. Send them in and also, let us know how we best can support you.

Each day through this time, we as your Wisconsin Cabinet, will be sending you an email with a brief devotion or prayer to provide you with a small bit of care. You each are held in and surrounded by our prayers in the spirit of Christ. Keep breathing. Keep safe. Know that we all rest in the grace and Spirit of God.