



A MINISTRY OF LOUISA CHRISTIAN CHURCH
A VIRGINIA CHRISTIAN CHURCH DISCIPLES OF CHRIST CONGREGATION

The Disciple

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When God Won't

Take Away Your Anxiety

By Rachel Moreland

I've had numerous conversations with people who ask me about my faith and its role in regards to how I cope with anxiety. Where does God fit in? They might expect me to give them some of these "cookie-cutter" answers like "Because I'm a Christian, I don't struggle with my anxiety." or "Trusting in God removes all anxiety."

But I tend to stray away from these reductions of our emotional capacities as humans. Instead, I leave room for something else. Something that needs to be said from someone who's been there and sometimes who finds herself still there.

Here are the five things to keep in mind if you're a Christian struggling with anxiety.



1. God can heal us from anything, even anxiety.

Approaching the subject of healing from anxiety disorder is always a tricky subject. As a Christian I believe that God can do anything. Nothing is impossible for Him (Luke 1:37). Does this include healing people from illnesses? Yes. The former argument does not exclude mental illness.

While this was not my personal experience, I do know a couple of individuals who have personally experienced God's healing from different neurological or psychological disorders. Yet for me, and perhaps to others, the question remains: Is there room for God amidst an anxiety disorder when he hasn't taken it away? The answer is not black and white.

2. Having anxiety is not a reflection of your lack of faith.

I cannot tell you how many times I have heard well-meaning churchgoers tell me, "You just need to pray about it more; you really need to go before the Lord." Let me tell you about my going before the Lord. As someone who dealt with panic attacks and anxiety disorder throughout college, I can only say that I wasn't only just going before the Lord, but I was face-down-lying-on-the-bathroom-floor going before the Lord. All of us have had a moment at some point in our lives where our body meets the end of ourselves. All dignity is pushed aside. And we beg and plead. Often on our knees. Or in my case, on my hands on knees.

3. Healing comes in many forms.

God did not take away my anxiety disorder that night as I lay face down on the bathroom floor of my apartment. He

did not miraculously heal me from my anxiety in one instant act of extraordinary intervention. I didn't automatically stop having panic attacks. I still had to catch my breath and count to 10 in the middle of a work meeting to avoid a potential breakdown. My experience wasn't one of immediate relief. It wasn't a miraculous healing that some encounter in church pews. Managing my anxiety was a long and drawn-out process. It was the result of many months of intense counseling sessions and emotional energy. But in that process, I found relief. And I experienced healing. As I accepted the fact that I struggled with a disorder, I took a step back and observed the bad habits I needed to break. The process was anything but easy or formulaic, but it allowed me to slowly regain that peace of mind that Philippians talks about. "And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:7)

So did God heal me? Not in the way you would think. Not in one instant heavenly instant. I have no shame in admitting to you that my prayers didn't result in the end of my disorder. Healing takes place in many different ways. What I can attest to is that God gave me the peace and determination to manage those days where anxiety was too close for comfort. And through that, I found grace. And ultimately, freedom.

4. We are not alone in our anxiety.

It's important to recognize that God does not promise we will never experience hardship. I still feel a sense of nervousness from time to time. I still have the occasional random panic attack in the supermarket aisle (bless the dear woman who consoled me in the freezer aisle of Target). We will never live a life free of adversity.

But God does promise that He will be there right there with us when we go through those difficult times.

How comforting it is to know that I am not alone in those moments of darkness!

I have the companionship of One who has already overcome anxiety. He's been there, done that. In Matthew, it says that Jesus overcame the world. He knew what it was like to feel overwhelmed. To feel anxious. He knew pain and suffering. I don't know about you, but that's a huge relief to know I am not isolated in this fight.

5. The road to recovery can be slow and messy.

Today I still struggle with anxiety. My faith does not remove the voice of negative self-talk. But I do have confidence in one thing: God meets me where I am. He has been with me every step of the way. From diagnosis to recovery. And looking back, I can certainly attest that I am not the same person I was several years ago as I sat in the doctor's office discussing different side effects of antidepressants. I can confidently say that the worst is behind me.

When I hear that there is no room for God in the whole "mental health" debate, I want to remind those people of something that I think is one of the key issues at the center of this whole conversation: God loves people in their humanity and we are to do the same of one another. Despite our perceived "weakness," despite the things that would hold us back, despite our human tendencies to fear and to feel insecure—God still uses us to inspire, to lead and to love others. He uses anxious people.

I am the most peaceful I probably have ever been on my journey, but every now and then, I still feel a little off. But it's encouraging to know that I don't have to be perfect.

I don't have to feel perfectly.

I can just be.

And that's perfectly OK.




I just want to say how incredibly blessed we are to have people from this church come out on a Saturday and fix up our yard. I can tell you we are struggling with uncertainty about what the near future will look like. Not something we ever imagined would happen. But it is nice to know that there are people in this world so caring and thoughtful and willing to help out people in need.

I thank God everyday for my family and thankful that our daughter goes to such an amazing place. If there is ever anything that our family can ever help you out with just ask and we will do our very best to help you. May God bless each and everyone of you for your generosity and hardwork.

Thank You so very much.

The Morris Family.



Be still,
and know
that I am
God.

Psalm 46:10

Be still and know that I am God.
The original Hebrew root of Be still doesn't mean "be quiet"; it means "let go." That's very different, don't you think? Let go and know that I am God! Let go of trying to control your spouse! Let go of your worry about your finances! Let go of your unforgiveness! Let go of your past! Let go of what you can't control—and rest in the knowledge that God is in control!



HAPPY
BIRTHDAY!

Carter K	August 1
Brandon P	August 2
Eleanor P	August 2
Paula W	August 4
Jimmy B	August 5
Margaret L	August 5
Andrew W	August 13
Patty M	August 14
Allen P	August 16
Josephine W	August 16
Karen K	August 17
Abigail S	August 17
Sarah W	August 18
Elissa H	August 19
Angela K	August 25
Penny B	August 27
Kurt F	August 30
Jacob K	August 31



Sundays in August 9AM
Outside of
Louisa Christian Church
(Contemporary Casual Worship Service)

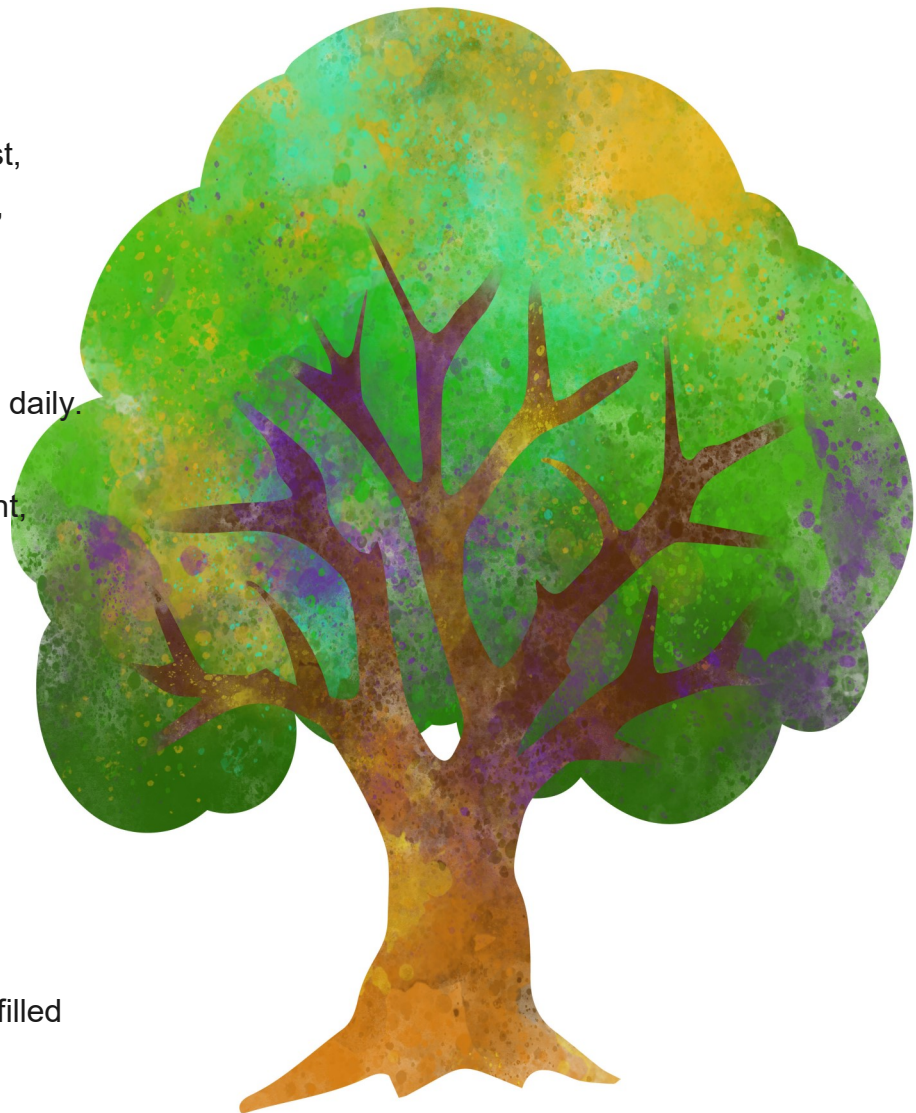
WHEN I AM AMONG THE TREES

by *Mary Oliver*

When I am among the trees,
especially the willows and the honey locust,
equally the beech, the oaks and the pines,
they give off such hints of gladness.

I would almost say that they save me, and daily.
I am so distant from the hope of myself,
in which I have goodness, and discernment,
and never hurry through the world
but walk slowly, and bow often.

Around me the trees stir in their leaves
and call out, "Stay awhile."
The light flows from their branches.
And they call again, "It's simple," they say,
"and you too have come
into the world to do this, to go easy, to be filled
with light, and to shine."



The Outreach Ministry will be hosting a “**Fill the Freezer**” day on August 7th at 9:30am.

Come by to enjoy fellowship while we prepare 3 dinners with a main dish, 2 sides, and desserts to bless anyone who needs to be blessed.

You can help by being present in person, providing a gift card donation for supplies, or filling part of the grocery list.

Have questions or need more information? Please feel free to contact Penny Best at 540-748-9048 or email at PBest2Runners@gmail.com.

Fill the Freezer



Saturday

August 7

9:30 am

Bible Studies

All Bible studies are held in person as well as continuing on the Zoom platform.

Wednesday
10:30am

Thursday
7:00pm

Contact Pastor Vincent to get the Zoom information.

Men's Fellowship Group

Men of the community are invited to join this group for outings, work days, and fellowship. This group meets occasionally and on no specific schedule. Please contact Pastor Vincent to get added to the list for notification of activities and events.

In addition, this group is not exclusively men. Anyone with interest in the activity planned may join the group for the activity, but it is planned by men with the hope of having a time of fellowship.

JOIN US ONLINE

Facebook Live
Each Sunday at 11AM

On our Website
Anytime
LouisaChristianChurch.org



Alter Flowers

Remember an occasion or honor an individual by providing flowers for the alter on Sunday.

Contact Sharon Duke (louisalandlady@gmail.com) or sign up on the sign up sheet in the church foyer.

Rag Tag Army

By Martin Bell

From his book *The Way of the Wolf*

I think God must be very old and very tired. Maybe he used to look splendid and fine in his general's uniform, but no more. He's been on the march a long time, you know. And look at his rag-tag little army! All he has for soldiers are you and me. Dumb little army. Listen! The drum beat isn't even regular. Everyone is out of step. And there! You see? God keep stopping along the way to pick up one of his tinier soldiers who decided to wander off and play with a frog, or run in a field, or whose foot got tangled in the underbrush. He'll never get anywhere that way. And yet, the march goes on.

Do you see how the marchers have broken up into little groups? Look at that group up near the front. Now, there's a snappy outfit. They all look pretty much alike—at least they're in step with each other. That's something! Only they're not wearing their shoes. They're carrying them in their hands. Silly little band. They won't get far before God will have to stop again.

Or how about that other group over there? They're all holding hands as they march. The only trouble with this is the men on each end of the line. Pretty soon they realize that one of their hands isn't holding onto anything—one hand is reaching, empty, alone. And so they hold hands with each other, and everybody marches around in circles. The more people holding hands, the bigger the circle. And, of course, a bigger circle is deceptive because as we march along it looks like we're going someplace, but we're not. And so God must stop again. You see what I mean? He'll never get anywhere that way!

If God were more sensible he'd take his little army and shape them up. Why, whoever heard of a soldier stopping to romp in a field? It's ridiculous. But even more absurd is a general who will stop the march of eternity to go and bring him back. But that's God for you. His is no endless, empty marching. He is going somewhere. His steps are deliberate and purposive. He may be old, and he may be tired. But he knows where he's going. And he means to take every last one of his tiny soldiers with him.

Only there aren't going to be any forced marches. And, after all, there are frogs and flowers, and thorns and underbrush along the way. And even though our foreheads have been signed with the sign of the cross, we are only human. And most of us are afraid and lonely and would like to hold hands or cry or run away. And we don't know where we are going, and we can't seem to trust God—especially when it's dark out and we can't see him! And he won't go on without us. And that's why it's taking so long. Listen! The drum beat isn't even regular. Everyone is out of step. And there! You see? God keeps stopping along the way to pick up one of his tinier soldiers who decided to wander off and play with a frog, or run in a file, or whose foot got tangled in the underbrush. He'll never get anywhere that way!

And yet, the march goes on...

