



Grain

“Grief work is social justice work. There can be no lasting social justice without discussions of how we come to pain – in ourselves, in each other, and in the wider world.” –Megan Devine

Field

32 When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” 33 When Jesus saw her weeping and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. 34 He said, “Where have you laid him?” They said to him, “Lord, come and see.” 35 Jesus began to weep. 36 So the Jews said, “See how he loved him!” 37 But some of them said, “Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?” 38 Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. 39 Jesus said, “Take away the stone.” Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, “Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead four days.” 40 Jesus said to her, “Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?” 41 So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, “Father, I thank you for having heard me. 42 I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me.” 43 When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” 44 The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Unbind him, and let him go.” John 11:32-44

Thoughts by Judy Mills, Madison

When a loved one dies unexpectedly, how many of us pray for God to intervene: to turn back the clock, prevent the accident, avert the natural disaster, cure the illness, or if all else fails, to raise the person from the dead? Or when we witness a preventable injustice, how many have prayed for an immediate reversal of a policy decision that led to senseless suffering. Most of us do, even some who may not have previously believed in God.

Jesus had performed other miracles before, but raising Lazarus from the dead was probably the most dramatic miracle of his ministry. It must have been quite a scene: Lazarus had been dead for four days, Jesus asked for the stone to be rolled away, declared God to be his Father and the one who sent him, cried out for Lazarus to come out of the tomb and told them to unbind Lazarus, who walked out wrapped in strips of cloth, all of this in front of a crowd of people. Jesus knew this would draw even greater attention to his ministry and would eventually contribute to his arrest, trial and crucifixion, yet he performed this miracle. It was time. He would lend credibility to his identity as the Christ, and that would lead to more grief and also hope.

When we pray for God to save a loved one from death or to instantly reverse injustices that will take time to undo, we are grieving. Grieve, and in the midst of our grief, remember our hope in resurrected life in ways we don't yet recognize in this world and in the life to come. Happy Monday!

Share

Send any quotes you'd like to share with our network to cynthia.crane@elca.org

All Monday Quotes found under the Resources & Advocacy Tools tab at www.loppw.org

Many blessings upon you,

Judy