

Dear Disciples

September 11, 2021

Transcript



Hello, Disciples. This weekend, we mark the 20th anniversary of the terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001. Anniversaries are often difficult and poignant at times.

Earlier this week, I participated in a trauma response roundtable with several leaders from our church - the military chaplain, a hospice chaplain, a minister who's researching moral injury, and the associate director of Week of Compassion, who is always in trauma response, and the new director of our mental health initiative at NBA. As we all discussed our memories of 9/11, I personally remember being at home, taking a mental health day, watching the Today Show on NBC and seeing live that second plane hit the second tower, and later, transfixed and traumatized by the images I was seeing, watching those towers fall.

I have a cousin who, at the time, lived in Upper Manhattan, and we couldn't get to her. It was a couple of days later before she was able to reach out to let us know that she was okay.

Some of you may have known family members or friends who were lost on that horrific day. We know that the society in which we live was forever changed - by how we move in and out of airports even how we think of certain parts of the world. We have, in some cases, descended into a form of bigotry that is not reflective of the limitless love we should be showing for all of God's humanity. And we have carried within our bodies the memories of 20 years of war and sadness.

The Apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians in Second Corinthians 4, "We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed." As we reflect on those attacks nearly 20 years ago, we find ourselves in a situation where the pandemic still swirls viciously around us. We have watched one more time as desperate refugees struggle to leave a land torn by war.

We continue to be in economic ups and downs; and we grieve the loss of more than 700,000 lost to COVID in the United States, more in Canada. You may have lost a loved one; you may have lost a friend; you may still feel in your body the traumatic memory and loss of 20 years ago.

But remember the words of Paul: "We are afflicted, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed."

As a church family is part of the one body of Christ, we are a movement for wholeness. And part of that wholeness is not that we will not grieve, not that we will not know trauma, but that we will, among ourselves with, and for, each other, create communities where care is possible, where healing is possible, and where hope is always present.

On this very important anniversary, I pray for your peace and for the peace of the United States and Canada, and for peace around our world. It's in the name of the Prince of Peace that I know that this is possible. So thank you, Disciples, for listening today, and remember that God loves you and so do I.