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25 May, 2020

## **Where is God?**

"My help comes from God, the maker of heaven and earth." Psalm 121:1

Dear Ones,

I am lying to you about the date. The day I write this is May 18, and I am attending the Festival of Homiletics, a preaching conference held annually, this year online. But I am writing my Monday Letter of Hope now, as I will not be back to work until a bit later in the week.

I am also writing next week's letter today, because I want to share with you a powerful idea which I just heard from the great American Methodist Bishop, William Willimon. He has spoken at most of these conferences which I have attended, and I am consistently blown away by him.

He said, "God has a habit of showing up in cruciform situations." *Cruciform* means 'shaped like a cross.' He went on to remind us that whenever the sky gets dark, that is when God shows up. Whenever the strong winds blow, that is when God shows up. Whenever our own resources fail us, *that* is when God shows up.

Last fall, Willimon says, most Christians went to church with fairly self-serving questions in their hearts: how can I get more joy out of my marriage? *Or* how can I live with less stress in my life? Now we are showing up with foundational theological questions: is God on our side? Are we being punished? Will we get through?

And where is God?

Willimon reminds us that after Jesus' death and resurrection, the disciples retreated from the world. They went and hid in an upper room, and locked the doors. Two of them left town, and headed out towards Emmaus. Better anywhere else but Jerusalem. And it was right into those moments that Jesus stepped. Into the upper room, saying "Peace be with you." And onto the road with the disciples, who did not know him until he broke the bread.

Where is God, when the virus comes? Right here in the mess with us. Never doubt it. It's where God always is. And always will be.

**Grace to you, and peace,**

**Kate**

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*"Our relationship with God and each other strengthens us, and helps make the world a better place.  
We welcome and include **everyone** into congregational life."*

