



# The Friendly News

## San Antonio Quakers

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Dear Friends:

Welcome to spring! The weather is still cool, but the trees and bushes are beginning to leaf out. We'll soon see how much we lost in February's killing freeze. We lost the plants in the above picture, but at least we've got their memory. **We're planning a work day from 9-1 on Saturday, April 10<sup>th</sup>**, to clear out the garden beds and plant anew. See details on page 4 and Pam's story and photos on pages 8 & 9.

**We have resumed hybrid Meetings for Worship on Sunday mornings:** a combined gathering on Zoom and on the Meetinghouse porch. Barring a major COVID surge, we expect to continue these meetings until it is safe to meet indoors. We don't know when that will be, but we do need to plan. **We will hold a Threshing Meeting from 11:30 to 1:00 on Sunday, April 18<sup>th</sup> to identify the issues that we will need to address before we can resume indoor meetings.** See page 5 for information on how Quakers use "threshing meetings" to come to clarity about what's facing us. These meetings don't make decisions; they do, however, get issues on the table and they give everyone a chance to share their wisdom.

We have two other special events in April. We are planning another **Hatchback Party on Thursday, April 8<sup>th</sup> from 6-7:30pm** in the Meetinghouse parking lot. See page 3. And **Gary W. will lead a forum on Wednesday, April 14<sup>th</sup> from 7-8pm:** a worship-sharing on a query he describes on page 4.

Finally, we are planning another **Spring Fair – this year on May 1st.** It will be a neighborhood yard sale, with the Meeting focusing on books and donated (not homemade) baked goods. See page 6.

-- Jim S. & Megan G., Newsletter Co-Editors



## April Query

**How have you been able to see that of God in everyday things and interactions with people, friends, and family?**

### Regular Events (by Zoom)

Here are the direct links for our weekly Zoom events. You do not need a Zoom account to join.

- **Hybrid Meeting for Worship – Sundays 10-11am**, followed by check-in and discussion: *Zoom and In-Person*
  - **In-Person on the Meetinghouse Porch**  
(masked and distanced)
  - [CLICK HERE to join by Zoom](#) ID # 976 0522 6497; passcode: 194077
- **Course in Miracles discussion – Tuesdays 7-8pm**; led by David
  - [CLICK HERE to join by Zoom](#) – ID # 988 3173 6394; passcode: 724708
- **Midweek Forums – Wednesdays 7-8:30pm**
  - April 14<sup>th</sup>: Worship Sharing on the Query: “What does it mean for thine eye to be single?”, led by Gary W.
  - [CLICK HERE to join by Zoom](#) – ID # 976 0522 6497; passcode: 194077
  - Check for forum updates on the Meeting Calendar: <http://bit.ly/3rK61CV>
- **Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business – Wednesday April 21<sup>st</sup> 7-8:30pm**
  - Please review the agenda at <http://bit.ly/2BoFt4Y>
  - [CLICK HERE to join by Zoom](#) – ID # 976 0522 6497; passcode: 194077
- **Friday Morning Meeting for Worship – Fridays 8-8:30 am**
  - [CLICK HERE to join by Zoom](#) – ID # 976 0522 6497; passcode: 194077

*For ALL Zoom Meetings: by telephone at +1 346 248 7799, then enter ID#*

### Special Events

- **April 8<sup>th</sup> Hatchback Party**: 6-7:30pm in the Meetinghouse Parking Lot. *See p 3*
- **April 10<sup>th</sup> Garden Work Day**: 9am-1pm. *See p 4*
- **April 14<sup>th</sup> Forum**: Worship Sharing on the Query: “What does it mean for thine eye to be single?” (Matthew 6: 22-23). *See p 4*
- **April 18<sup>th</sup> Threshing Session**: To identify the issues we need to address before we can return to meeting inside the Meetinghouse. After Meeting for Worship, from 11:30-1:00. *See p 5*
- **May 1<sup>st</sup> Spring Fair**: A community yard sale. *See p. 6*

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## Coming Events

# FRIENDS HATCHBACK PARTY



**When:** April 8, 2021

6:00pm - 7:00pm Greet & Eat

7:00pm - 7:30pm Silent Worship

**Where:** Meetinghouse Parking Lot  
7052. Vandiver Road

**RSVP:** REQUIRED for planning purposes

By April 5

[jmhaynes@earthlink.net](mailto:jmhaynes@earthlink.net)



### The Plan

- Cars will be parked for appropriate distancing. You will be directed upon arrival.
- Bring your own food, drinks & tailgate setup.
- Meetinghouse & Rooms will be closed
- Bathrooms will be open
- MASKS are REQUIRED when not eating or drinking.
- Keep to 6' distancing at ALL times.

## Garden Work Day: April 10th, 9am-1pm



The freeze hurt many of the plants in our Meetinghouse garden, including the cactus pictured in this photo from a year ago. We Quakers are, as theologian Esau McCaulley reminds us, among the "holy fools who dare believe in God's power to call dead things to life."

Come join us as we resurrect our garden as a place of beauty.

Bring gloves, masks, water, snacks, and whatever else you need to play in the soil. **SEE PAM'S STORY AND PHOTOS ON PAGES 8-9**

## April 14th Forum: Worship Sharing on the Query: "What does it mean for thine eye to be single?"

7-8pm on Zoom: Led by Gary W.

The Quaker tradition of forming a "query" and then letting Friends ponder a response, in silence, is often a rich source of worship sharing. Worship sharing is both similar to our Meeting for Worship and yet distinctly different. It is similar in that we wait in silence and learn from our own souls what our deeper feelings and thoughts are regarding the question. Yet it is different in that we gather with the intent to hear and learn from each other, and therefore we are encouraged to step into the silence more readily and share what we have been given.

The light of the  
body is the eye: if  
therefore thine eye  
be single, thy  
whole body shall  
be full of light.

Matthew (6:22) KJV

It is also the case that specific quotes add to the richness of the subsequent query. Here is a piece of Scripture which seems very suitable to the Quaker task of discerning the spirit:

"The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" (Matthew 6: 22-23)

No doubt we want our "whole body to be full of light"! But what does it mean for thine eye to be "single"? Research into the translation of this word gives other connotations, such as "clear", "sound", "perfect", or "generous". It is interesting that the focal point of being in light or darkness is attributed to the eye, and it must be "single" despite the anatomical reality of our having two eyes. There seems to be a mysterious meaning behind these words. There is a passage from an early Greek Orthodox monk which seems to help us discern what this act of "singleness" involves:

"Some of the Fathers have called this practice stillness of the heart, others attentiveness, others the guarding of the heart, others watchfulness and rebuttal, and still others the investigation of thoughts and the guarding of the intellect. But all of them alike worked the earth of their own heart, and in this way they were fed on the divine manna (Exodus 16:15)."

----- St. Simeon The New Theologian, "The Three Methods of Prayer"

**Query: What does it mean for thine eye to be single?**

***Threshing Meeting: To identify the issues and concerns that we must address before we hold Meetings for Worship inside our Meetinghouse***

**11:30am-1:00pm on April 18th (after Meeting for Worship)**

The COVID-19 pandemic is not over, and it is not yet safe to hold our Meetings for Worship and other activities indoors. We can, however, now foresee the pandemic's end. Still, we have several decisions to make before we resume indoor Meetings for Worship, forums, and so on. These include at least the following:

- What modifications, if any, do we need to make to our air circulation system to improve airflow and prevent infections?
- What seating adjustments do we need to make to maintain safe distancing?
- Do we want to place any limits on how many people may attend indoor meetings?
- What should we require of people (masks?, vaccinations?, ????) before they attend?
- How will we include Friends who are unable to attend in person, either for reasons of health or of distance?
- When and how can we resume offering childcare and our children's program?

We expect that other questions will arise. This threshing meeting is designed to identify the issues and see if/where we have potential differences. It is not designed to solve these differences, nor is it designed to come to firm decisions.

**Threshing Meetings/Sessions**

*From the Website of Madison, Wisconsin, Friends Meeting*

A threshing session provides an opportunity, guided by the Spirit, to ask questions, as well as to state a position or express a point of view regarding [a major issue facing the Meeting]. It is an opportunity to explore all our options deeply and thoughtfully. It is a process through which Friends are invited to speak plainly and truthfully about their questions and concerns. Our gathered community will strive together to respond to the questions and concerns with love and thoughtful discourse stemming from the quiet of the Light to bring us round to a clearer understanding of our options. No decisions will be made at the threshing session(s). The threshing session(s) will help prepare us for decision-making when the Meeting is ready for that phase.

Conducting threshing sessions does not preclude cycling back to answer new questions. Moving to the threshing phase is a continuation of the process of knowledge development. It is one more step in a process through which we are guided by the Light and our love for each other to greater understanding and the right outcomes for our Meeting.

A threshing meeting or session is usually moderated or facilitated by an experienced Friend, who is asked in advance to take on this role. The facilitator/moderator is responsible for making sure that everyone present has a chance to speak and air their views. Care should be taken to ensure that Friends of differing opinions can and do attend the threshing meeting or session. Friends with specific knowledge about the subject under discussion should be asked to present factual or complex material and be available to answer questions. Someone should also be asked to take notes at the meeting for future reference.



## Quaker Fair May 1

Yes, the Fair is back in time for Mother's Day and Graduation. Building on our success, it will be a neighborhood yard sale in the parking lot. Meeting will feature books and baked goods [donated, not home baked this year].

David Hayes will be the site coordinator, to lay out and will sign people up for each slot. If you would like to have a slot to sell your [now] unwanted treasures, or you know of some else who would, please contact David [[deeperdaze@gmail.com](mailto:deeperdaze@gmail.com)].

In preparation,

- If you are donating books, you can sort out paperback and hardcover books for sale and bring them to the Meetinghouse on a Sunday, or on May 1.
- We'll need lots of paper bags and the loan of several awnings or tents.
- Word of mouth publicity will draw shoppers. Please help out.

We will follow CDC guidelines re masks, distancing and sanitizers. F/friends please wear FMSA tee-shirts & name tags, bring shopping bags, invite family, friends, and neighbors.

So, put the date on your calendar May 1 with rain date May 15. The timetable is:

- 7:30: set up tables & tents;
- 8:00: Friends & neighbors set up;
- 9:00-1:00: sell, then take everything down.

And tell Gretchen how you would like to be involved [[jmhaynes@earthlink.net](mailto:jmhaynes@earthlink.net)]. There's plenty of work to go around in this community building event, the postponed 6th Annual Quaker Fair,



Photos from the  
Fall 2019 Commu-  
nity Yard Sale  
More at  
<https://bit.ly/3cPv42q>

# get to know your Friends

## Friends Meeting of San Antonio

**Sara Ramey** is an attender at the Friends Meeting of San Antonio. She is the Executive Director and an Immigration Attorney at the Migrant Center for Human Rights, a grassroots nonprofit she helped found with three other attorneys in 2017 to respond to an unmet need in her community and to live out her values in practice. She enjoys gardening and cooking at home and whenever possible getting out into the great outdoors, whether that be hiking, biking, camping, kayaking, skiing, or rock climbing.



**What was your favorite childhood toy?**

Penguin slide. So much fun!

**What was the last book you read?**

20,000 Leagues Under the Sea (in French - currently reading with family book club we started during COVID to get to know each other outside of our regular patterns / conversations)

**How many states and/or countries have you lived in?**

5 states ~ California, Oregon, Washington, DC, Maryland & Texas  
10 countries ~ US, Mexico, Spain, Costa Rica, Chile, France, Paraguay, Portugal, Belgium, Australia

**Where did you attend your first Quaker Meeting?**

Washington DC

**Which of the Quaker testimonies speaks to you?**

All the testimonies but simplicity and maybe integrity the most.

**Name one positive outcome from your Corona pandemic experience.**

**"More yoga! I've had the opportunity to become certified as a teacher."**

1

Cats or Dogs

**CATS**

2

Coffee or Tea

**TEA**

3

Book or Movie

**BOOK**

4

Winter or Summer

**BOTH!**



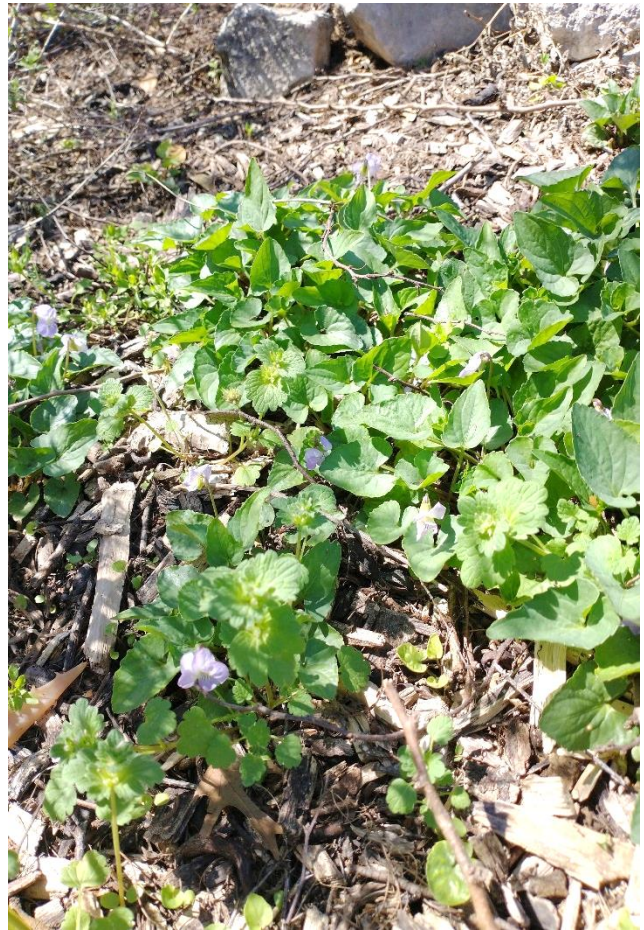
## *News from Friends*

### *Texas tough at FMSA*

By Pam Spurgeon

A walk down the Meetinghouse path days after our double whammy snowfalls made me sad when I saw the blackened foliage on plants which we put in a year ago. Snake herb, a Texas native that bloomed last year in late spring with bell shaped lavender flowers, looked like it was a total loss. There was not much green anywhere except on the grassy sedge at the first turn in the path. I was eager to look at my favorites, the Missouri violets, which despite their name, are also native to Texas. Happily, they looked nice and green and every much alive huddled next to some mushy aloe vera. Special credit goes to Marian Carter for suggesting the relocation of a particularly big and pointy rock from the dry creek bed to the new violet patch that many folks (who will go unnamed) felt should be a short cut so they could get to the end of the path 10 steps sooner. Thanks to that suggestion they were able to be well established by the time of the deep freeze.

The purple flowers had not appeared yet on my first visit after the freeze, but after 10 days I was delighted to see not only blooming violets, but new growth everywhere, even on the snake herb that I had mistakenly written off on my first inspection.



Little 4 nerve daisies were showing their smiling sunny faces too. Everywhere I looked the natives were acting like nothing bad happened. The aloe and creeping rosemary fared the worst, but I am expecting there to be some new aloes hiding under the unsightly mush, that is protecting and nourishing them until they are ready to emerge.





Back in the fall of 2020 a group of F/friends planted some new trees to eventually help hide the chain link fence and adjacent property a little better during fall and winter. I snapped this picture from above looking down on the 2-foot-tall bald cypress that was just a bare skeleton for the past 6 months. Inside the protective cage you can see the bright yellow green new foliage that has finally appeared. This little guy is a survivor! It may not ever be as magnificent as the cypresses pictured below, since it's not growing on a riverbank, but I am optimistic that this native will eventually provide some fall color.

The three evergreen sumac fared equally well and even the smallest one (barely 8") has new growth.

In closing, if you are inspired to add Texas hardy natives to your landscape, go online and check the list of plants for sale at the online sale by the Native Plant Society of Texas (NPSOT) San Antonio chapter on 8 April (order online). Pick them up at the 11 April plant pick up. <https://npsot.org/wp/sanantonio/bexar-roots-sale-list/>

If you want free plants, talk to me. I frequently cull overabundance among my native and a few non-natives (iris, purple heart ground cover aka wandering jew).



Image from Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center

\* \* \* \* \*

## *In Memoriam*

Robert "Bob" Luckhardt (b. October 29, 1929) passed away peacefully in the early morning (1:46 AM) of Saturday March 20, 2021. He was in a rehab facility in San Antonio, Texas where he was working on regaining his capability to go back to his townhome after a fall on March 3. He was a psychologist (BA psychology from Earlham College, MA in psychology from Indiana University) and later a hardware store manager when he took care of his aging father in Scarsdale, New York, where Bob grew up. The last few years, Bob spent summers in East Otis, Massachusetts at a lake home near his son, Andrew Carl Luckhardt, and the winters in San Antonio near his daughter Carol Luckhardt Redfield. He enjoyed fishing, watching baseball and football, working with his homeowners associations, travelling in his RV, and drinking root beer. He is survived by his wife, Carolyn "Sue" Luckhardt as well as his two children and their families (and his dog, Becca).

## **Wider Quaker World**

### **FGC Consultation: Spirit and Community Online**

In the past year we have learned a lot about how to gather online as a community. Yearly Meetings, Quarterly and Monthly Meetings, and other Quaker organizations have been working to create community online and to find ways to allow Spirit to move us. As we transition from an all online world to a blended in-person and online one, it seems valuable to come together to share our learnings.

### **Register Here!**

April 17, 2021

10:30-5:00pm Eastern

Please join us online for:

#### **Panel: What Have We Learned? Spirit and Community-Building Online**

In this dynamic session you will not only hear about best practices for building community and creating a worshipful environment for your meetings and gatherings on Zoom, you will also walk through examples facilitated by the panelists. We will explore what works, why it works, and how you can devise similar practices for your own virtual meetings.



#### **Roundtables:**

There will be two sessions of Roundtables. In each the moderator will offer a 5-to-7-minute presentation and then open it to sharing by the whole group. We have much to learn from one another.

- Clerking Online with Steve Mohlke
- Religious Education & Programs for Youth with Melinda Wenner Bradley
- Religious Education & Programs for Adults with Francisco Burgos
- FCNL: The Nuts, Bolts and Pitfalls of Online Quaker Gatherings Bobby Trice, Annie Chiorazzi
- Remote Pastoral Care with Rebecca Shillenback, Martha Gurchich, Helen Mullin
- Experiential Spiritual Exploration and Deepening Online with Marcelle Martin
- Future of Worship: Online, In Person and Blended Together with Jay Cash

Other possible topics include: Hybrid or Blended Gatherings Social and Tech, Zoom and Beyond, Beyond Worship: Fellowship in our Meetings, Re-framing Annual Sessions/Large Gatherings.

#### **Cost: Pay as Led:**

Pay as led is a way of acknowledging that wealth is not distributed evenly among Quakers. We ask that you prayerfully consider your financial resources and the value you believe the Consultation will bring to your life and to Friends. Based on this personal reflection, we invite you to pay as led and to make any donation that feels appropriate to you. The actual cost of the event is \$35 per person.



## *FCNL Monthly Activities*

In the last Congress, the House passed the *Justice in Policing Act* following widespread public outcries for racial justice and policing reform. In November 2020, more than 800 advocates joined FCNL to lobby Congress to pass the *Justice in Policing Act* as part of our Annual Meeting.

The bill stalled in the Senate, but we kept building momentum. And now, nine months after the police murdered George Floyd, the House has once again passed the *George Floyd Justice in Policing Act (H.R. 1280)*. This is an important step to reform how police operate in 18,000 jurisdictions nationwide. If enacted, this bill would hold police accountable and save lives by banning chokeholds and no-knock warrants, limiting the transfer of military-grade weapons to local police departments, raising the standards for the use of force, and reforming qualified immunity. Find out more and email your senators here: <https://fcnl.quorum.us/campaign/31408/>

## *“The Way Will Open” – 2021 FGC Gathering.* *June 27-July 3, 2021*

By Gretchen Haynes

The just-issued 2021 Friends General Conference Virtual Gathering features an abundance of workshops, evening programs, worship and worship sharing, and other activities. If it used to hard to choose what to do, it is even harder to choose between a large number of week-long 90-minute workshops focused on racial justice, Quaker history, bible study, environment, clerking, mysticism, non-theism, etc. You name it, it's here somewhere. There are also Saturday one-shots on Thomas Kelly, Class & Status in our society, chant, so much more.

All the elements of a traditional Gathering have been reassembled in Zoom format so we can see the others attending each event. Because most workshops are interactive, there are capacity limits on them. There is a cost to producing this abundance, and a fee for the kind of package of events you choose, from full program to single event.

The full information, advance program and online registration starting April 15-29 are at [www.FGCgathering.org](http://www.FGCgathering.org). If you have never attended a Gathering because of distance or cost, now is your chance to do it.



## *Inspiration*

### *Being Trees*

**by Maria Popova**

When I am sad, I like to imagine myself becoming  
a tree.

Branches that bend without breaking, fractal  
with possibility,

reaching resolutely toward the light.

Roots touching the web of belonging beneath  
the surface of the world,

that majestic mycelial network

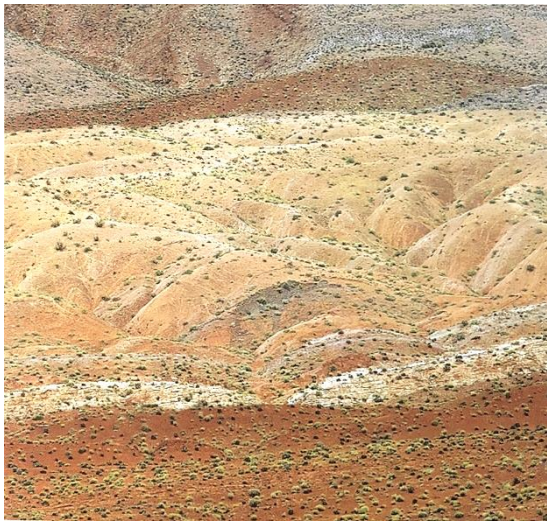
succoring and nurturing and connecting tree to  
tree —

connection so effortless, so imperturbable, so  
free.



*Read Maria's work at [Brainpickings.org](https://brainpickings.org)*

### *Southwestern Wisdom*



"This land is a poem of ochre and burnt sand I could  
never write, unless paper were the sacrament of sky, and  
ink the broken line of wild horses staggering the horizon  
miles away."



"This earth has dreamed me to stand on the rise of  
this highway, to admire who she has become."

***Joy Harjo (words) and  
Stephen Strom (photographs):  
Secrets from the Center of the World (1989, U of Arizona Press).***



## Food for Thought

### Spiritual Autobiography

By Megan D.

This past fall I felt spiritually flat - or perhaps spiritually flatlined is more accurate. Prayer seemed hard. Meditation wasn't working. Spiritual disciplines were non-existent. This would be problematic for anyone; however, it would probably concern you to know that I myself am a spiritual leader who apparently doesn't have her own spirituality figured out.

I realized I needed a divine kick in the rear, so I began researching spiritual directors. I had little to no understanding what a spiritual director actually was, or if it would be helpful. It honestly sounded a bit "woo-woo." However, I knew fellow logically minded faith leaders who benefited from this practice, so I decided it was worth a try.

After interviewing possible candidates, I found THE ONE. She was spunky, energetic, and had just the right amount of spiritual trauma to appreciate my dysfunction. You see, I grew up in an evangelical context with well-intentioned people. Yet there were moments when their good intentions were outweighed by the fear and anxiety their theology thrived upon.

As she and I spoke, stories poured out of me describing early experiences in the church. Stories that I thought I had handled, but perhaps not. Pain points that were still a bit tender. She recommended that I think through my spiritual autobiography and bring this to our next session. *Spiritual autobiography?* Immediately my brain tried to formulate a plan – what format should I use? How do I deliver the results? *Just see what comes up for you*, she said.

A few weeks later, we met for our first session. While I had done a lot of thinking about the *concept* of a spiritual autobiography, I hadn't actually written mine down. I didn't know where to start. Plus, it felt horribly self-indulgent to force another human being to sit and bear witness to my life. *Just start at the beginning*, she said. So I did – age 3.

It felt verbose and disjointed, yet it wasn't. Soon I noticed the ways these events were connected and the impact they had on my spiritual journey. I had never given context to the experiences or appreciated how confusing it might have been at such a formative age. As I saw the pain reflected in her face in a place of non-judgment, I started to feel a bit more compassion toward my younger self who made some questionable choices while questioning her faith.

When I finished, she sat back in her chair and said, *Wow. It is a miracle you are still connected to your faith. How amazing to see the ways you continued to seek God in spite of all this.* I really had not thought of that. Then she asked, *Where was God in all of that?* I paused. God was there, that was clear. And God is still here – even when I feel spiritually flatlined. Even in a pandemic. Even when we are questioning who God is and where God is. God is here for all of it.

Megan's website is [www.meganraecoaching.com](http://www.meganraecoaching.com)

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