



Today is Saturday and I am needing to rest and write a sermon! I am reminded of kindness. All week I have seen signs of kindness peaking through the cracks of chaos. I am trying to be kind to myself having witnessed creative kindnesses all around. It may be ironic that kindness in the time of COVID19 comes in the form of physical distancing. The kindest thing we can do for most people now is not to touch or crowd but to open space for safety. I miss my family and friends; I miss my parishioners and the community. But when I know it is from kindness that this results it is somehow easier. The poet Naomi Shihab Nye wrote the poem below. She wrote it having discovered that kindness overcomes fear! Try it on...

Kindness by Naomi Shihab Nye

Before you know what kindness really is
you must lose things,
feel the future dissolve in a moment
like salt in a weakened broth.
What you held in your hand,
what you counted and carefully saved,
all this must go so you know
how desolate the landscape can be
between the regions of kindness.
How you ride and ride
thinking the bus will never stop,
the passengers eating maize and chicken
will stare out the window forever.

Before you learn the tender gravity of kindness,
you must travel where the Indian in a white poncho
lies dead by the side of the road.
You must see how this could be you,
how he too was someone
who journeyed through the night with plans
and the simple breath that kept him alive.

Before you know kindness as the deepest thing inside,
you must know sorrow as the other deepest thing.
You must wake up with sorrow.
You must speak to it till your voice
catches the thread of all sorrows

and you see the size of the cloth.

Then it is only kindness that makes sense anymore,
only kindness that ties your shoes
and sends you out into the day to mail letters and
purchase bread,
only kindness that raises its head
from the crowd of the world to say
it is I you have been looking for,
and then goes with you every where
like a shadow or a friend.

--Naomi Shihab Nye, from *The Words Under the Words*

Rev. Dr. Martha Tucker

"And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and walk humbly with your God"

--Micah 6:8

*"We seldom notice how each day is a holy place Where the eucharist of the ordinary happens,
Transforming our broken fragments Into an eternal continuity that keeps us."*

— John O'Donohue, To Bless the Space Between Us: A Book of Invocations and Blessings

I would love to live like a river flows, carried by the surprise of its own unfolding.

— John O'Donohue