



*Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.*

*John 14:27*

Each week I receive a few emails from a group called Faithful America, that has been around since 2004. It is the largest online community of Christians putting faith into action for social justice. They engage faithful people who are sick of sitting by quietly while Jesus' message of Good News is hijacked by the religious right to serve a hateful political agenda. Faithful America and its members challenge Christian nationalism and white supremacy and seek to renew the church's prophetic role in building a more free and just society. The way the leadership at Faithful America engage people is through rapid-response digital campaigns that tap into the grassroots power of Christians across the nation.

Just yesterday, I received one of their emails that began with these words, "This Sunday, March 13, marks two years since the coronavirus pandemic was declared a national emergency and major shutdowns began here in the United States." It's hard to believe isn't it? We are entering our third year of this deadly pandemic.

They reminded us that it has been a challenging two years, filled with grief, loneliness, illness, anxiety, and lost loved ones. On top of all that, the nation and the church alike have had to contend with misinformation and division on the very issues that should have unified us around the common good. No one knows what the next phase of this pandemic will look like, but we continue to walk through it together, and with God."

With all that is happening in our nation and the world right now, the war in Ukraine, global climate change and catastrophic climate events, deep political divides on so many topics, inflation including rising gas prices, it might be easy for us to forget about COVID. Yet, we do so at our own risk. There are still many, many people suffering from the illness and dying in the U.S. and around the world. We must not forget them. We need to be people who live in way they can be safe; heal and get the support they need.

There is so much to be frightened of right now, but fear serves no one and especially not God. Let us remember the words of our brother, Jesus, who told us, "Do not let your hearts be troubled." Why? Because Jesus has breathed his peace into us. Let us remember those who have suffered and have died from COVID and let us live in ways so that all may live in peace.

*Holy One, remind me today and every day that you have given your peace to me through your Beloved One, Jesus. Help me to live with the courage Your peace brings. Amen.*