

March 9, 2022

Additional comments to GC delay by Laura Witkowski, co-chair Michigan Conference delegation

There are many mourning this postponement, especially those who continue to experience harm, and I get that. As part of my Lenten devotional, I read this prayer a few days ago and returned to it today. It comes from *Good Enough: 40ish Devotionals for a Life of Imperfection*, by Kate Bowler and Jessica Richie and I share a portion of it with you.

Blessed are you, friend, sitting among the shards of what could have been. It is broken now, that dream you loved, and it has spilled out all over the ground...Blessed are you when mourning is the holy work of the moment, for it speaks of what is real...Blessed are we who mourn, saying let us remain in grief's cold winter for as long as it takes, that mourning might be to our hearts the gentlest springtime. Let the thaw come slowly, so we can bear the pain of it and find comfort at each release. Amen.

As I process this postponement, I am also reflecting on the fact that two years ago, March 7, 2020, we gathered at Albion College for a Called Special Session of the Michigan Conference in order to move the Protocol on to General Conference. No one in that room could have ever imagined what was to come. On that day, I said this following the vote:

"At our first delegation meeting in June 2019, my fellow co-chair Kennetha Bigham-Tsai, read this scripture as part of our devotion. I share it with you today. It's from Isaiah 43:18-21: Do not remember the former things or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. The wild animals will honor me, the jackals and the ostriches; for I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, to give drink to my chosen people, the people whom I formed for myself so that they might declare my praise.

"This is one of the many decisions we will make in the coming months. Maybe God is about to do a new thing. Keep listening to God and to each other. Don't forget to take a breath."

That comment from two years ago still applies. Maybe God is about to do a new thing.