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(above) Pullen Church staff members Brooks, Warren, Nancy and Tommy ringing bells during the National Day of Prayer on May 7.

Weekend Connections

May 8



Meditation: Psalm 139

My thoughts,
Dive deeply searching my soul
Desiring to know.
They become aware of the innermost me.
Together, we journey
One step at a time;
These thoughts are intimately truthful about
My strengths

My weaknesses
My frivolities
My sadness
Before my words rise up to my throat,
They are heard in my heart.
They can enfold me with love
One step at a time,
They can uplift me with strength.
They quicken my senses to a wonderful world:
My soul can only say,
Thank you.

During the late summer of 2009, I did something I never imagined I would do in my life: Walk into the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous. Growing up, I dreamed of being many things in my life such as an opera singer, a writer, an actor, and even a spaceship (I was three and it seemed plausible). Of all these possibilities, the term that never made the list was “recovering alcoholic.”

Early recovery is a surreal journey where time simultaneously moves at rapid-fire while refusing to budge a second. You are thrust into a world where strangers have the tools needed for your survival, and, for one hour a day, each lesson comes with bitter coffee and the distinct smell of stale cigarettes. The remaining hours of the day are spent hearing the pronounced thoughts that echo in your head. At times, these sounds are so deafening that you dare not move less this cacophony becomes a disastrous reality. Certain days were so overwhelming that when asked how I was doing, I would respond by holding my hands to my head while saying, “It’s so loud.”

Living during COVID-19 has recalled these memories. I have spoken with many people who are struggling with a sense of time and feeling the monotony of the stay-at-home order. We are perplexed by how we can feel so tired now that the regiments of our overly-scheduled routines have suspended. We feel lethargic and unkempt, and our longing for social interaction comes with the dissatisfaction of Zoom calls. On top of all of this, we are alone with our thoughts, and they are loud and overwhelming.

One day in early sobriety while talking to a woman with long-term recovery, I described these exact feelings of being engulfed by the thoughts in my head. She smiled and said, “Sometimes, your head is a bad neighborhood where you shouldn’t be left alone.” Her advice echoed the counsel of my sponsor.

Wanting to quiet these thoughts, I began employing their suggestions. Daily walks taught me to move my muscles and change my routines. I learned to name how I was feeling by calling friends and being vulnerable enough to say simple phrases like, "I'm really sad," or "I'm feeling very anxious." I also began to recognize that discomfort was part and parcel of being human. Negativity neither meant I was a bad person nor did it mean I was flawed. Importantly, when I was inundated with the cacophony in my head, I sat quietly and whispered, "This too shall pass."

These simple steps taken repeatedly over time became natural habits, and there was an unexpected by-product. The discord in my head became very quiet. It became easier to live in my skin as the anxious and loud noises softened. Life began looking less like punishment and more like an opportunity, less like a loss, and more like a dispensation. I started to realize that all humans possess joy, happiness, fear, complacency, frivolity, sadness, anxiety, and strength. I also knew that when life became uncertain and troublesome, these feelings and circumstances would pass. I grew to be okay in uncomfortable and heart-breaking situations knowing it would all eventually change.

Once a year, I celebrate the anniversary of my recovery. It is a simple moment where at the end of an AA meeting, I stand and state the number of years I have been sober. There is some clapping before I return to my seat. After the meeting, there is a very predictable occurrence. A person, usually someone new to recovery, approaches me and utters, "I'm just curious, how have you kept sober all this time?" At that moment, I recognize the earnest nature of the question as I watch the familiar emotions simultaneously speeding and crawling across the person's face. After a pause, I softly say, "One step at a time."

-Brian Crisp

Please join us online this Sunday at 11am for a service of music

This Sunday, May 10:

***May a Song Remain Within You: A Service of Music
with music and messages from Pullen Musicians and Friends***

including voices and instruments from:

The Youth Choir
 The Chancel Choir
 The Pullen Orchestra
 Janice Hocutt, Organist/Pianist
 Laurel Harris and Rob Marnell
 Primera Iglesia Bautista de Matanzas, Cuba
 Peace Cathedral, Tbilisi, Republic of Georgia
 Malkhaz Songulashvili, Metropolitan Bishop of Tbilisi

Watch our Livestream Services

New: Silly Songs with Mr. Tommy!

Each week, I will be adding silly songs for the Pullen children to sing, jump and dance around with!

Enjoy this first song and "Shake Your Sillies Out" with me!

Silly Songs and Story Time with Pullen Friends are on the Pullen [Children's Ministry webpage.](#)



-Tommy Cook

Silly Songs with Mr. Tommy

Stay Connected to Pullen Church during Covid-19



Pullen has suspended indefinitely our Sunday groups, Sunday morning in-person worship, and Wednesday night programs. Our church office is also closed.

Please visit the Pullen Website for an archive of the latest email and video links:

Staying Connected

May 2020 Pullen Newsletter



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