



Lenten Reflection for Thursday, March 17th

Emily Hursh

You can listen to the reading and reflection by clicking [here](#).

Jeremiah 17:5 - 10

Thus says the Lord: Cursed are those who trust in mere mortals and make mere flesh their strength, whose hearts turn away from the Lord. They shall be like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see when relief comes. They shall live in the parched places of the wilderness, in an uninhabited salt land. Blessed are those who trust in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord. They shall be like a tree planted by water, sending out its roots by the stream. It shall not fear when heat comes, and its leaves shall stay green; in the year of drought it is not anxious, and it does not cease to bear fruit. The heart is devious above all else; it is perverse— who can understand it? I the Lord test the mind and search the heart, to give to all according to their ways, according to the fruit of their doings.

I have a very hard time in the grocery store. The cereal aisle in particular fills me with existential dread. Dunkin donuts cereal? Cookie dough pop-tarts? What IS this stuff? How are we this removed from food?? And the cereal aisle comes after a long, stressful time trying to choose the foods that are best for the environment, and the people who work to grow and produce them. One option is organic, but another is local. They have organic valley lactose free milk! But only in 1%, and we like whole better. They're out of organic ketchup! I know they'll have it at the co-op, but I really don't want to make another trip today! By the time I'm on my way home, I'm usually close to tears. It feels like the world is ending, and no matter how hard I try, I'm never doing enough to fix it.

This passage reminds me that I can only spiral in this way if I'm trapped in thinking that this is all my problem, that it's up to me personally to save the planet. I have to remind myself that the system is designed to make me blame myself for global warming because I'm not making all the right purchases, while companies choose to maximize profits by providing me with poor options. There are things I can and should do to help, but having an anxiety attack outside the grocery store is not one of them. I have to turn to God and put it in Their hands, and give myself some grace.

I think too of the way we're meant to see Christ in everybody: putting my trust in the Lord isn't only saying a prayer and letting it all go when it's overwhelming. It's also finding strength in community: I'm so thankful for this church, Kensington-Windsor Terrace Mutual Aid, and the Windsor Terrace Food Coop (even if I don't always go there). "Blessed are those who trust in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord." It seems like such a tall order, but it's the only way for me to find peace, and to hope for change.



Emily has been a member of Holy Apostles since 2017, and lives in the neighborhood with her girlfriend Maija, and their cats, Iris and Irene. She's a doula, childbirth educator, and aerialist who loves cooking, baking, making her silly podcast, watching nature documentaries, and playing ukulele.