

## “Waiting” by Kelsey Davis

### Advent 2022 | St. David’s in the Valley Episcopal Church

Yesterday I facilitated a board meeting. Our one-hour meeting was overpacked with agenda items to get through. I could feel the anxiety building as after 30 minutes we had only ticked off 2 items on our laundry list of to-dos. When it came to my turn to share, the words flew out of my mouth automatically---“efficiency is love.” I watched a few board members heads nod in agreement, the board members, who like me---pride themselves on overpacked days, and pushing through the never ending list. I also watched a few board members whose faces fell. Those board members among us who understand that our being together is more about deepening and slowing down, being present to one another, sensing God and the movement of Spirit within and between us---than it is about checking boxes.

I find a deep tension in finding a balanced pace between the contemplative and active life—between our being and our doing. Society loves a fast clip---to push us towards exerting all our energies at once. And I’ve found that the church can be just a little too slow at times. Slogging and withholding in fear of stepping out of a comfort zone, or fear of trying something different.

Pace is so important. If we spend all our energies too quickly--- it can lead to burnout and compassion fatigue. If we withhold getting active---we may miss receiving the gifts of experiencing how faith works in action for the transformation of the world.

I know that my tendency is to always hurry up. To want to speed up a red traffic light, or to push through a meeting. I want change now. I can get impatient when things are inefficient. And thankfully, I have an 11-month-old and the season of Advent that reminds me that slowing down and waiting is healing because it helps me be more present to the life I am living.

Sometimes I feel scared to stop and wait. It seems so counterintuitive to me in a world with so much suffering and so much work to be done. It also feels counterintuitive when my to-do list has 8 different categories of all the responsibilities that need attention and care. Waiting is vulnerable for me, and it is necessary. It is vulnerable because when I wait, I am more receptive. Receptive to others, receptive to God, receptive to myself. And sometimes I realize, in slowing down, that I don’t even know what shape my longing takes---what I am working so hard for or waiting for in the first place. In waiting, I often wonder what I am waiting for---what is the hope and longing of my heart?

It can be so tender.

Some of you know that I have a “yield” sign on the back of my office door. Waiting is a spiritual practice for me and it is an offering of love. Waiting, ultimately keeps me from missing my life because it creates the space I need to notice where and how God is present through kindnesses offered through barista, stranger, loved one, and friend.

Advent invites us to wait---and to keep watch.

Advent invites us to recalibrate our pace---to slow down and to pick our head up. It does not ask us to slog or to hurry--- **but to wait faithfully---with one eye to the sky, and with one hand to the plow**---pausing to listen, to sense the presence of God among us---as we watch for God’s coming in ways we least expect.

And the good news is that we do not wait alone. God waits with us, carrying us as we hold one another.

\*\*\*

closing poem offered was from “A Blessing for Waiting” by Jan Richardson