



Springing Forward

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Spring is in bloom in my neighborhood. Trees are budding. Flowers are starting to blossom. The wood near my home is alive with the bright spring green that heralds new life. Birds are singing. Frogs are croaking. The sun shines more often and temperatures are warming up. Even the rain is gentler.

I find reassurance in the rhythms of Creation. I take comfort knowing that no executive order can stop spring from coming. Spring cannot be deported or arrested or legislated out of existence.

This is not to say all is well. I know our earth is in dire shape, and that tornadoes and floods and heat waves and wildfires are also in the forecast.

The news includes a myriad of other injustices: [a young woman of color arrested and charged for having a miscarriage](#); [an innocent father deported to an El Salvador prison](#); [the number of anti-trans bills in the U.S. is up to 830 this legislative season](#). Even though the charges were finally dropped against the young woman in the miscarriage case, and even though a small number of those anti-trans bills have been defeated, the terror of these actions is alive and well in the Body of Christ. Humanity continues to cultivate practices of harming one another.

I find strength knowing that Jesus did not turn away from suffering; he turned toward it. He sat with, ate with, talked with, and wept with those who were suffering, knowing the root of that pain was often unjust practices and policies maintained by people in power.

While Jesus overthrew a few tables in his time, he did not overthrow the power structure in ancient Rome. He did, however, teach people to build communities of care and to center the well-being of those who are vulnerable instead of continuing the unexamined following of unjust laws and traditions that consolidated and perpetuated power among a few.

Spring arrives each year as an extravagant, unearned gift from the Creator. Justice, however, must be constantly tended and cultivated. Toxic soil and beliefs must be dug up and replaced with nutrient-rich growing spaces. Weeds must be tenaciously uprooted, again and again. Plants must be watered enough to thrive, but not so much that they drown.

What practices are you tenaciously cultivating right now? Whose needs are you centering and watering in your daily life, in your faith communities, and in your work? What are you uprooting so that you have more room deep and abundant community care?

Perhaps you are making calls and writing to legislators, showing up at school board meetings, having brave conversations, or organizing activism around issues of injustice. But don't forget the importance of tending healthy places, too: making soup for a sick friend, sharing pictures of the new baby in the family, praying in creative ways, and hosting dinners full of fellowship and laughter.

After all, this is what our faith calls us to do: to cultivate justice, practice kindness, and walk humbly together and with our God.

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