



Celebrating that Christ is all and in all by seeking, inviting, belonging,  
serving and reverencing God's creation

A couple of Sundays ago, many of you were sitting in the 8:00 service at Grace while I drove to West Virginia to join my mother as she marked her 97<sup>th</sup> birthday. Stopping by the side of the road, I tuned my phone into Vimeo live. If I couldn't be at church, I was going to be with you in spirit. Fog on the road, I heard "The Lord be with you. And also with you." Fog in my head, I listened to a reading from the book of Numbers, "Who will give us meat to eat...we remember the fish we ate...now our lives are wasting away." Fog in my heart, the book of James shook me by the shoulders: "If any of you are suffering, they should pray."

As I turned north on Route 26, skirting Asheville for the high pass between North Carolina and Tennessee, Joslyn started talking about how we may sometimes want to limit God into showing us only what is in our comfort zone. She noted that Flannery O'Connor wrote we might need shocking to wake up, to grow. What was God trying to shock *me* into seeing? Winding past Spruce Pine and climbing into the higher Smokies, folks back at Grace began to observe the Eucharist. I prayed the words along with you. When I heard, "the gifts of God for the people of God" it resonated like a bell. I was celebrating a Eucharist with nature.

I looked at the road as if I had been driving blind for who knows how long. I looked at the range of mountains all around me and the bell rang true. The gifts of God are everywhere. We are *all* people of God blessed with these gifts. This is the Eucharist of the Earth. What have we been given to do to celebrate and nurture these gifts? *Emily Chatfield-Lusto*

