

Santa Cruz Fellowship
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Friends,

I came across this quote from Alexandre Dumas this week; "All human wisdom is summed up in two words; wait and hope." It also seems to sum up our life these days.

Whether it is waiting for a vaccine (we have our appointments scheduled but they are not until the end of March), waiting for a baby to arrive (he was due February 5th), simply waiting for Spring or waiting for life to go back to some semblance of normal, our lives currently revolve around waiting.

Since that seems to be the theme for us right now, we decided that perhaps we should spend some time thinking about waiting and what the fruit of waiting might be for us in the spiritual realm. One author read in this season compares waiting to the "*place of fertile emptiness.*" A few months ago we wrote about this Covid season being a *Fallow Season*; a time of stopping, of ceasing life as we knew it, a time to rest, reflect and let the stopping do its good work, a time to let the emptiness refresh.

Waiting doesn't always refresh, but it can, that is the hope. In her book, *When the Heart Waits*, author Sue Monk Kidd explores this connection between waiting and being refreshed, "*To create newness you have to cover the soul and let grace rise. You must come to the place where there's nothing to do but brood, as God brooded over the deep, and pray and be still and trust that the holiness that ferments the galaxies is working in you too. Only wait. And somehow the transformation you knew would never come, that impossible plumping of fresh life and revelation, does come. It manifests itself in unseen slowness. So it would happen to me and so it will happen to all who set out to knead their pain and wounds, their hopes and hungers, into bread. Waiting is the yeasting of the human soul.*"

Elsewhere in the book Sue speaks about waiting not just being passive. The words *passive* and *passion* come from the same Latin root, *path*, which means "to endure." "*Waiting is thus both passive and passionate. It's a vibrant contemplative work. It means descending into self, into God, into the deeper labyrinths of prayer.*"

One of the hopes of this season is that in all the waiting, in the stillness, in the forced solitude that we have been *enduring* that our souls have been *yeasting*, rising, growing and expanding to create more room for God and His presence in the center of our being.

The spiritual practices of Contemplative prayer and Centering prayer have been very nurturing for both of us in this season. Sitting in silent prayer, breathing in and breathing out our desire for more of God's spirit to make a home in our hearts. Praying in each breath that the '*pure light of the image and likeness of God*' would yeast into more of the mind of Christ in our everyday lives. (Thomas Keating, Transformation in Christ)

If knowing more about this way of praying interests you, we have a description of the history of the practice and how to experience it on our website under resources. <https://santacruzfellowship.com/2019/03/18/centering-prayer/>

We are grateful for all of you who wait, and watch and hope with us in this season. May your waiting give rise to a fertile newness of spirit.

Rich
and Jayne