



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Be Still and Know That I Am God
ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton Weekly Video Message
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Recently, I've been reading about the physical effects brought about by the chronic anxiety that we're suffering under this pandemic. The pressure that we feel. People's hair is falling out in clumps. People have terrible headaches. They can't eat. Their stomachs are upset. They can't sleep, or they want to sleep all of the time. These are real physical manifestations. And we need to be aware that our minds and bodies and spirits are all interconnected, and take heed.

I think sometimes when we're in this chronic stress and anxiety and when we're experiencing these actual physical pains, it's important for us to take a step back when we're engaging with others and not be quick to ascribe motive or to jump on what they say.

I know this is something I have to be mindful of, so that I don't condemn or somehow disparage somebody else without taking a breath and saying, 'Maybe they're having a really bad day, or maybe *I'm* having a really bad day.'

And one thing we can do when we're in the midst of all this anxiety and stress, when we're feeling stress, when people are stressing us and in a moment we might say or do something that would not be helpful.

My spiritual director gave me this exercise. It's from Psalm 46. It's the verse "Be still, and know that I am God!" And so, you take it in steps:

Be still and know that I am God!
Be still and know that I am.
Be still and know.
Be still.
Be.
Be still.
Be still and know.
Be still and know that I am.
Be still and know that I am God!

Breathe that in and out, dear church, at any time, day or night, when you feel the stress, and believe that promise is true. Be well, dear church."