

On the mind of the Rev. Canon Deacon Denise LaVetty...

I'm not crying, you're crying... Oh wait! I'm crying.

What is it about crying? What is it about that surprising, out of nowhere, uncontrollable, embarrassing visit from the Holy Spirit? When I'm with people who are going through tough times and are crying, I assure them that tears are just the Holy Spirit giving us release. And I do believe that. I'm also pretty sure this occurs to make room for more stuff to cry about.

My sister Kathy's favorite song was "Big Girls Don't Cry" (The Four Seasons). As kids, we would ridicule one another for crying, calling each other "crybaby" and so when "Big Girls Don't Cry" became a hit, well it was a good song for us.

In my human resources career, I did a lot of employee counseling and would often urge women not to cry in the workplace. Women had too many other obstacles to success and tears looked like weakness and we didn't need any more of that! Workplace tears were for ladies room stalls and walks around the block. If a female employee cried in my office, I would close the door and I would let them stay as long as it took to compose themselves and head back out to face the world, makeup ruined but fresh tears held in their proper place, stinging unshed behind the eyes.

I worked in financial services and investment firms for around 30 years, tough environments, and some really horrible work climates and some just plain unfair treatment. I didn't cry once. I'm no longer in that world. I work in a kinder, gentler, and caring environment now. But last week I cried at work. That Holy Spirit, she got me good!

A perfect storm in a stressful week, my commute was a tense almost two hours, a security guard was rude to me, and then a co-worker told me I had hurt her feelings. THAT put me over the edge! I think I just couldn't stand that I added even one small drop of wound to this already bleeding-from-the-gut world.

Well, I began leaking* from the eyes, and while I don't think it was a full-out ugly cry, it could not have been a good look for me. And it was hard to stop. 30 years in corporate America, a perfect no-cry record, and now this.

I know it feels great to laugh with others, but crying? I've often wondered, all the times I've cried alone, if those tears were wasted because they weren't shared, weren't witnessed. Some say the most profound passage in Scripture is just two words "Jesus wept" (John 11:35). His tears were shared.

I thought about all the incredibly valid reasons to cry every day and wondered why I don't do it more often. Our world is full of people either crying or holding in the cry. Sometimes I feel so sad about what's going on in our world that I can't cry about it, I just tighten up (how about you?) and I feel like I'm cold or unfeeling because I can't seem to just let go and cry about it. And then I have a bad morning, and I'm a mess. Yeah, it all sneaks out of you when you least expect it. I'm now thinking that whenever I can cry, I'll just do it.

We may all have times we feel so wounded by the world around us and by our own personal worlds, our scene so chaotic, so lacking in solutions. We may find ourselves struggling to hold it together, to put up a strong front, to not cry in front of anyone. And then, some small thing triggers us and our cover is blown.

I pray you don't struggle or beat yourselves up when you lose a little control, but instead just lean into it, lean into your faith, let the Holy Spirit hold you a little. I got through that day and by the time I got home, I had already texted a couple of friends and family "I cried at work today!". I realized I was almost bragging about it.

I cried at work. So what! I may just do it again.

* In an old TV Series "Third Rock from the Sun", when the aliens saw a human cry, they assumed they were leaking!

TODAY AFTER CHURCH

Visitors are invited to pick up a welcome bag at the back of the church following the service. All are welcome to Coffee Hour in the Parish House at 12:15 p.m. For those interested in a brief tour of the church's art and architecture, please meet one of our volunteer tour guides at the Chapel of the Resurrection near the back of the church.

12:30 to 1:15 p.m. Join us in the Parish Living Room for a “sermon talkback” with today’s preacher, the Dr. Nathaniel Jung-Chul Lee. This will be a time when you can ask questions, give feedback, and help us all to deepen the conversation that the sermon has only just begun. Talkbacks will continue through the season of Easter.

12:30 to 2:00 p.m. Vestry meeting in the Parish Dining Room.

COMMON CHORD CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

Pledges keep climbing for the Common Chord capital campaign for restoration of the organ. As of today, the total is **\$655,421.25**. Will you help us reach our \$800,000 goal with a pledge to the campaign? Pledges are payable over three years. Pick up a campaign brochure and pledge card in the Narthex or go to givingsites.com/commonchord to learn more.

MOTHERS OF BEDFORD – REGISTER TODAY!

Wednesday, May 1, 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. Join us for an exclusive evening of cinema and discussion with the screening of the powerful documentary *Mothers of Bedford*, followed by a Q&A session with the director, Jenifer McShane, an alumna of Incarnation Camp.

This event not only showcases an important social issue—motherhood in prison—but also supports a meaningful cause. All proceeds will support Incarnation Camp scholarships, including for children of incarcerated and formerly incarcerated women through Hour Children, a faith-based nonprofit organization and partner in mission of Church of the Incarnation. The cost is \$50 per person, and you can register at incarnationcenter.org/mothers-of-bedford.

A catered reception begins at 6:00 p.m. in the Parish House. The film screening begins at 6:30 p.m. in the Assembly Hall.

ICE CREAM SOCIAL AND AFTERNOON TEA

Saturday, May 4, 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. All are invited to the Parish House for a time of fellowship and an update on Incarnation's Common Chord capital campaign for restoration of the organ. We'll have tea party classics, from scones to sandwiches, and all the fixings for ice cream sundaes.

We will also screen a special video message from our Campaign Patron, Bishop Matthew Heyd! We hope everyone who loves Incarnation will participate in the campaign and join us for the festivities.

20s/30s MIDTOWN ROOFTOP GATHERING

Sunday, May 5, 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. A member of Incarnation's 20s/30s Group has offered the rooftop of their apartment building – The Oriana, 420 E 54th Street – for young adults to gather for some springtime fellowship. There will be food and some themed activities. RSVP to the Rev. Dr. Nate Lee (nlee@churchoftheincarnation.org). We look forward to seeing you then!

FAMILY FRIDAY

Friday, May 10, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Parents and children of all ages are invited to the Assembly Hall for a pizza dinner and special program focused on spiritual gifts. More details coming soon! Contact the Rev. Dr. Nate Lee to RSVP.

MORAVIAN OPEN DOOR DISCO BINGO

Saturday, May 11, 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. Once again, we are planning a bingo event at Moravian Open Door. This time we're shaking it up a bit with Disco Bingo! Live from the capital of bingo, the MOD residence at 347 E. 18th St., we will be sharing the fun and fellowship and perhaps some nifty moves, along with several rounds of bingo. We'd love to have you attend, but if you can't, please feel free to donate a \$10-15 gift card that we can use as a bingo prize.

Suggested gift cards: CVS, Starbucks, Chipotle, Subway, Trader Joe's and Whole Foods. You can leave your donations at the Parish House or give them to Lenore Ritter.