

FOOTSTEPS IN THE SAND

I had just finished a Prayer Quilt. It is a simple pattern, just 2 blocks, spaced one after the other. I do not do complicated. This quilt spoke to me. One piece is two sets of footprints embedded in a sandy beach walking together, the other is a blue pattern that looks like waves. It is based on the idea of a person looking at their life and there are two sets of footprints walking along a sandy beach, their footprints are sometimes not visible. They are talking with God and ask, "Where were you God when my footprints are gone; through the darkest days of my life, you are not walking with me." God replies, "When you only see one set of footprints that is because I was carrying you." Sometimes, illness comes, sorrow comes, failure comes, our mistakes become our downfall, and we feel alone and deserted by a God who has promised to never leave us. But God carries us when we are too weak to walk, when life becomes going through the motions, when we are hurt the most by those, we trusted the most. I thought of someone I love going through an exceedingly difficult time, facing the possible loss of her life from cancer at a young age and at the same times the cruel betrayal of the person she loved. I want her to know that God walks with her and although she might not see her footprints, it is because he is carrying her, and he is weeping for her. I do not believe that God gives us cancer to bring us closer to him, but I do believe that when cells in our bodies produce a cancer, God weeps for us and holds us closer to him. He uses our sorrows and defeats and illness to draw us closer. He does not use the drunk driver who takes a loved one to bring us closer but uses the loss to bring us closer. He is the great comforter not the avenger that takes away someone or something to punish us. Even in the midst of our sorrows he holds us in his arms and weeps with us.

Isaiah 40:11a He tends his flock like a shepherd. He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart.

Psalms 91:4 He will cover you with his feathers and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart.

Lord, we ask that you be with those that are suffering in grief and illness, those that are broken-hearted, those that are alone, those that hunger and thirst, those that cry out to you in their need. May we be the hands and feet of Christ to those that seek you, give us just a glimmer of your compassion and your love for others so that we may serve you. May we see each person as you see them, worthy of forgiveness, worthy of love. Be with our Pastor, bless his ministry, be with his family. Be with our staff and leaders, bless their service. May we listen for that voice, that leading that draws us to those who seek you and may we answer. In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen

Grace Epperson