

*Christ Lutheran Church, Ferndale, WA*

*Holy Trinity / Youth Sunday*

*June 12, 2022*

*Proverbs 8:1–4, 22–31; Psalm 8; Romans 5:1–5; John 16:12–15*

*Emma Petersen*

Toward the end of last summer, my dad and I toured a few colleges over the span of a couple weekends. We looked at Whitworth University which is in Eastern Washington, Eastern Washington University, and Western Oregon University. Besides the trip being super fun, I knew what I was looking for: somewhere far but not too far, a relatively small campus, and a good overall energy on campus.

Going into it, I hoped Whitworth would be the school that I found those things in. Maybe because in my head it seems closer than Oregon, or maybe because I genuinely did find those things there. For the most part I did. Until we toured Western Oregon, I was pretty set on Whitworth. However, everything changed when we went on Western Oregon's campus.

The scenery was amazing—there were lots of fields with little gardens, and a great view of the mountains. The size of the school was also perfect, and the town is super small as well. To put the icing on the cake, their education program sounded amazing. This school was the clear winner. However, with this decision came a lot of fear.

I would be living in a different state from all my friends and family, I would suddenly be faced with things like loans and bills, and I would have to go through one of the hugest transitions in my life in an entirely new place. As excited as I was about Western Oregon, this was pretty scary.

I think we've all had times where something we're so looking forward to is also something we're so afraid of. This brings me back to the first half of the reading from Romans we heard earlier: "Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God." In other words, we have peace and grace through Jesus all the time, no matter what.

If things seem a little scary, or if you're feeling uncertain about the future, you can rely on the fact that God is there like a blanket of peace over you every step of the way.

*Ryan Kuehnel*

The first 50-miler I went on, the second day was horrible. I wanted to quit so bad, I was thinking of ways to get out of it. Could I painlessly break my ankle? But I stuck through it, and more than the suffering I remember the amazing view.

In the moment, I was wondering “why are we taking this trail? It’s so grueling, I can’t do it, I can’t do tomorrow, tomorrow is harder...” And we sometimes think the same thing when we are in times of struggle. “Why is God doing this? He should know that this is impossible, how can it get better?” But it did get better.

It turns out the hike was longer than we thought, and the next day was easier, and so was the day after that. I just focused on putting one foot in front of the other, and trusted that the trail would end. There were several false endings to the hike. Every turn, every corner I thought “maybe the end is just around the corner” and every time it wasn’t, I was crushed. It wasn’t until I let go and accepted that it would end when it felt like it and focused on moving forward did I come to peace.

The same thing happens when you’re having a difficult time, you can’t help but wait for it to end. You’re walking with short breath thinking “God, when will this end?” But you need to stop waiting and accept

that its temporary. You will make it through, and the struggle will end. You just need to start putting one foot in front of the other and start moving forward. Every time I thought it was the end, the trail grew longer in my head. The trail was the same length, but I made it feel like it kept getting longer and longer.

Trust in God. God is infinitely wise. He knows what you can and cannot handle, and He knows you can make it through this. Just trust Him and start walking.