

Dear Friends,

We are now entering our third week of a new year, and hopefully we are starting to find our rhythm with new classes and schedules. While praying about the semester's start, I felt the Lord speak to me about those of us dealing with anxiety. According to *Medical News Today*, anxiety is primarily caused by environmental factors, including: changes in relationships, jobs, school, or finances. Most of us deal with some or all of these topics, especially at the start of a new semester. Often, when issues arise, we examine our circumstances closely to find a solution. One thought leads to another, and then another, until our minds can't stop the circular thinking process. At this point, the issue becomes overwhelming and all-consuming. Rumination, or dwelling on a specific issue, is a primary cause of anxiety, potentially leading to depression. We can help to break this downward cycle by replacing our negative thought cycle with positive self-talk or engaging activities like exercise, a simple walk, or listening to uplifting music.

In the Scriptures, David seems to struggle with anxious thoughts. He says, "How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and every day have sorrow in my heart?" (Ps. 13:2). I want you to know that you are not alone in this area. As a faith community, we must work together to encourage one another. Often, we get caught up in our struggle and don't realize that others close to us are walking through the same difficult journey. One of the blessings of a faith-filled community is the capacity to comfort one another through tough times. The comfort we receive from the Holy Spirit is meant to flow through us to someone else (2 Cor. 13:4). What if, in our anxious moments this week, we reached out to a friend to talk about how we are feeling? We might find out what they are anxious about, as well, and be able to pray together and encourage one another.

Father, I pray for Your strength to be poured out on our community. For those who are walking through what feels like a dark place, I pray that You will provide comfort for them. Anxiety is difficult to overcome, and we need You, Holy Spirit, to walk along with us and turn our mourning into dancing and clothe us with joy (Ps. 30:11-12). Amen.

COMING UP THIS WEEK

Mon, Jan 21 | NO CHAPEL – UNIVERSITY CLOSED FOR MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY

Mon, Jan 21 | Pursuit | Butterfield Chapel, 8:30pm

Wed, Jan 23 | Church Fair | Butterfield Chapel, 9:30am-12:30pm

Wed, Jan 23 | People of Prayer: Kari Brodin | Butterfield Chapel, 10 & 11:20am

Wed, Jan 23 | Leadership Preview Night for 2019-2020 Student Leaders | Argue HSC 104,

Fri, Jan 25 | Ephesians: Earl Creps | Butterfield Chapel, 10 & 11:20am

Sun, Jan 27 | Chic Chat and FellaShip | Butterfield Chapel and Argue HSC 231, 7pm



Phil Rasmussen D.Min.

Vice President – Church Relations and Campus Ministry

425.889.5308 (office)

phil.rasmussen@northwestu.edu / northwestu.edu

Instagram @pramussen

Money Magazine Top 20 Most Affordable Private Colleges

