The Obstacles of Others

A Lenten Study

During Lent this year, my sermons will be exploring the obstacles that Jesus faced in his ministry. These range from people to concepts, and not all of them are things that Jesus overcomes. No life is without its own obstacles, and hearing the obstacles that others face may allow us to be more empathetic, and also think about the challenges that we face in new ways, as well as how we might interpret scripture or faith in new ways.

This study consists of one scripture drawn from the upcoming worship service, an online video less than 20 minutes long, and a couple of questions for reflection. You are welcome to engage with this material in whatever way you would like and at any time. If you are interested in discussing anything that comes out of this process, please email me to indicate your interest and you will be included in the planning of a discussion session, likely on ZOOM, during Holy Week.

We pray that all burdens are lifted, but until that time may we hear one another with love.

—Rev. Scott

Week Three

Sierra Schultzzie

“my weight gain & PCOS diagnosis”

Link: <https://youtu.be/AAPUZAR8INg>

Scripture: Luke 13:1-9

Sierra Schultzzie is a body positivity and fashion creator who makes a variety of lifestyle and fashion content, as well as daily vlogs and podcasts (which are referenced in this video). Here, Sierra mediates on a recent diagnosis of PCOS and how it intersects both with her fertility and her body positivity journey. There is something of a focus on what other people deserve from us, as well as uncertainty about how to incorporate a body not functioning as it “should” into a body positivity framework. (For additional context, Shultzzie had her first child in 2021; this video is from 2019.)

In the parable in this scripture, there is a sense of people deserving what they get. When we think about people’s weight, their illnesses, or their bodies in other ways what assumptions are we placing on them, and are they accurate? How might this relate to the image of a tree that isn’t bearing fruit? If this was a young woman talking to you about her struggles, is there a way to use this passage to provide some wisdom?