

## God's Grace: My Experience

Shared by Hattie Bollerman

Sunday, March 5 at Plymouth Church Worship Service



One of the most awake periods of time in my life was a couple of years ago, when God came near—to comfort me and—I see now—to teach me—about His character.

MY story is pretty common one...in this world....I was in my late thirties, married for 2+ years and wanting more than anything else, to get pregnant, and for no medically

diagnosable reason, I could not.

Question mark in the medical file. Confirming for me that although they might tout a God complex, physicians are mere mortals, doing the best they can. They were not going to quickly fix me or this problem. So I inclined myself toward the only one with ultimate answers—God.

I let him know—or perhaps verbalized for myself—that I was dismayed, frustrated, confused, depressed....if I am honest—offended and scared—WHY I WAS BEING PREVENTED FROM having this pure, and good thing-- this pivotal part of my life?

God and I wrestled, we talked, He listened a lot. And then, in two very tangible ways, He responded and offered me a path. First, once I began really praying—meaning telling the truth about my fears and desires...daily...He showed up—in the faces and stories and embrace of others. I met women, formed deep friendships, heard stories so similar to my own....honestly...almost weekly. Some of the women whom I befriended at this point were able to redirect my path both mentally and—within the amazing infertility medical complex of NY. The direct and emphatic--advice they gave--likely led to existence of our Honora and Malachy. I cannot overstate how life altering and timely these relationships and conversations were.

And in their stories, and their love, I recognized God's fingerprints.

The second way that God came close during this period was again very physical—very fleshly—human. When you go through IVF, you first need to inject yourself with an unbelievable amount of hormone stimulants. The body becoming a little science project. And so each morning I would take out my tackle box of needles and instructions and line them up and start injecting them into my stomach. And I hated it. The sound, the thought, the pain. It wasn't my favorite moment of the day. And almost without thinking I just started praying—reciting Our Father, then the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm, then the Apostles Creed, then the Doxology. It wasn't conscious...something in me...called out and reached back to the place where I had first met God...as a child. This time, the words calmed me and I knew I wasn't alone in this...this moment, this struggle, this life. Steadying my hand, calming my anxious thoughts. He appeared in the repetition of truths. And in those moments, there was only me and Him and the clarity and hope and the love....in that daily prayer, remains with me.

I do have children now, so I guess I got what I wanted. But strangely, I was given in-pregnancy with much more than two beating hearts that season. I am forever changed by God's showing up for me.