

Augustana College

Chapel of Reconciliation

**Still In His Love**

**Jaci Sutton**

April 29, 2005

I'll never forget the feeling of rubbing sterile-smelling hospital lotion onto my grandpa's feet in the weeks preceding his death. He knew me so well. My not wanting to say the wrong thing, but struggling not to speak in the awkward silence that filled the space between us. It was his gift to me: an invitation to simply act when my mind was racing beyond my control. An invitation to touch when any attempt at words would prove inadequate. An invitation to care for a man who cared for me, too. An invitation to be still in his love.

Please Pray with me.

Lord, you bring us together, sheltered from the speed of the world around us, freed from obligations and meetings, or moments of great anxiety or sorrow. You call us to simply Be in your presence in whatever way we know how. Let my words speak to the stillness, the peace, that can be found in your abundant love and let us extend this peace to one another that we may walk as a community devoted to praising you for that which you so graciously provide. Amen.

Stillness is not something I am particularly good at, unless of course you count napping, which I like to think I have down to an art form. When I am busy I am happy, I like to tell people, which is partially true. I love to be busy, but there is always that looming pity party that I and others throw in hopes of gaining sympathy for all that needs to be done. I like my mind to be working at full speed. I hate silence in classrooms, when there is so much that needs to be said. And, my finger-nails are a testament to my literal inability to be still.

Because of such things, I can sense Christ's frustration with me, for surely I would have been one of the individuals to be overwhelmed with fear in the face of the storm. "Be still, Jaci!" I hear His voice so often this time of year. "Where is your faith?" I am convicted, as I have been so many times as I catch myself making lists in class or letting my mind wander to the things I must do while I sit in the pews at worship. It is usually at this point that I look up—caught--and see His hands spread gently over me, reminding me to just be still. In those moments I offer my prayers to Him, for His will, His body, His forgiveness. "Yes," He assures me as I look down at His body on the cross, "Just be still."

And so I try—quite hard at times—to give myself moments away from the storm that we so often make life into. And, repeatedly—frustratingly--I fail. However, the moments I surrounding my grandfather's death have served as the most precious of lessons: that perhaps literal stillness is not the stillness He intended. Rather, it is the stilling of the storm within, in order that the storm without may not cause fear. Christ frustratingly

stops the storm, wondering why this need be when His very presence should provide peace enough for the winds and rains of life to be bearable, peaceful, even. The storm should cause no fear, for His hands are over us, reminding us of the stillness that can be found in His love.

But this inner stillness is difficult to attain while in constant motion, of either the mental or the physical sort. And yet, I see its possibility in those who so gracefully and thankfully accept life's challenges, thus providing a sense of stillness and peace in those around them. While my mind is capable of understanding this peace at which I should reach, I have to admit that my inner self is somewhat behind. But I am not afraid, because, as I am ever-reminded by Aristotle and the Philosophy and Religion Department, our entire beings can be created by habit. We are not expected to get it right the first time, we are expected to battle the waves over and over again in order that we can come to a true realization of the stillness that is possible in His love. God blesses us with moments of seeming chaos, moments when it is beyond our capacity to say or do the right thing—moments of pain, moments of wonder, moments of grief. It is in these moments that we are called to love, to touch, to be—wherever we are—to look within our busy selves in order that we might find the stillness of His love.

Amen.

I couple of years ago I had the opportunity to attend the Fund for Theological Education summer conference, at which I was one of two students not headed to seminary. It was an awkward week, a week full of confusion and wonder. But in the middle of this week I

found myself blessed by a class called “Zen for Christians,” which taught the power of simply be-ing in God’s presence. And so I pass this on to you, challenging you, for a few brief moments, to simply allow yourselves to be. No worrying about what’s next or what’s passed. Nothing but being in the stillness of His love.

**MORNING WORSHIP**  
**Friday, April 29, 2005**

**PRELUDE**

“I The Lord of Sea and Sky”

**WELCOME/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**OPENING PRAYER**

**GATHERING SONG/SHARING OF THE PEACE**

“Shalom”  
WOV 724

**SCRIPTURE**

Psalm 46 - Read responsively

LBW 236

**GOSPEL**

Mark 4:35-41

**SERMON**

“Still in His Love”

Jaci Sutton

Major: Religion/Philosophy

Hometown: Brookings, SD

**TIME FOR REFLECTION**

**CLOSING PRAYER**

**BENEDICTION**

“Peace by Still”

**SENDING**

**L:** Go in PEACE to serve the Lord.

**C:** **Thanks be to God!**

SPECIAL THANKS to all who aided in this service: Andrea, Pr. Paul, Carol, Ingrid, Christie, Erik, Carl, AJ, JJ, Chapman, Kevin, Taylor, Wade, Chase, Mark and Ryan. Also to Dr. Ann Pederson and Dr. Murray Haar for encouraging silence and stillness in His presence, and to my family and Micah for never getting (too) annoyed with my incessant need for dialogue. Such moments of silence and dialogue are cherished and have come to shape my faith.

## CAMPUS MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

**ELCA SOUTH DAKOTA SYNOD ASSEMBLY.** Two students, one male and one female, are needed to represent our student congregation at the **SD Synod Assembly on June 3 and 4**. The event includes worship, learning, and discussion and resolutions considering decisions about the wider church. See Pr. Paul if you are interested.

**CAMPUS MINISTRY OUTREACH BAND** - Applications are now being taken for the new Outreach Band for next year. Application are available on the Narthex table.

### CHAPEL SCHEDULE

Sunday	Worship, 11 am - Josh Knudsen, Senior Sermon
Monday	Worship, 10 am - John Peterson, Admission
Tuesday	Koinonia, 10 am - chapel
Wednesday	Holy Communion, 10 am - ASA Inauguration
Friday	Worship, 10 am - Fenecia Homan
Sunday	Worship, 11 am - Kate Holmquest, Church Relations and Outreach Dir.