

**Ebenezer Baptist Church**  
Small Group Discussion  
April 30, 2023  
Sermon Title: I Remember You  
Speaker: Reverend Olivia Maxwell

**Psalm 42:1-6** *As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, my God. <sup>2</sup> My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God? <sup>3</sup> My tears have been my food day and night, while people say to me all day long, "Where is your God?" <sup>4</sup> These things I remember as I pour out my soul: how I used to go to the house of God under the protection of the Mighty One<sup>[d]</sup> with shouts of joy and praise among the festive throng. <sup>5</sup> Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God. <sup>6</sup> My soul is downcast within me; therefore, I will remember you from the land of the Jordan, the heights of Hermon—from Mount Mizar.*

**Summary:**

The sermon draws upon the witness of the Psalms as expressions of praise to God through many sufferings and joys. The Preacher stated “mental illness” is all around us, yet we often disregard how we are feeling and wear masks to cover how we are doing. Reverend Olivia suggested because people often consider mental illness a stigma, they should avoid talking about subsequently they do not seek the help that would benefit their situation. We often find ourselves crying on the inside while avoiding reaching out for help. However, several people throughout the biblical text experienced despair and depression demonstrating we also live with joy and sorrow every day. The sermon offers three ways we must connect our faith to the challenges we face in life:

1. **Acknowledge** when something feels abnormal. Acknowledge how you are feeling and what you’re trying to hide.
2. **Assessment** - Assess the challenges that are causing you distress. Have a mediator to help assess your concerns. Remember that everything you go through is not just for yourself. It is also so that you can help others going thru the same thing.
3. **Acquire** your faith and encourage others to use their faith. We aren’t meant to bare our burdens alone. Carrying “the cross” by yourself is selfish, even Jesus had someone help him carry the cross.

We have a high priest who is aware of all our challenges, struggles, and sufferings who empathizes with our weaknesses. He remembers every pain and can lift us up and

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strengthen us to encourage others. Jesus is always with us and can get us through any difficulty or heartache in life.

**Discussion Questions:**

- 1) How can we acknowledge what we're going through to others?
- 2) How can someone be freed from the shame of mental illness, depression and other similar illnesses - is shame real?
- 3) Who is in your village to help carry your crosses?
- 4) Which masks do you wear to hide your problems from others?
- 5) When we think God has forgotten about us and our dreams, desires, do we ever consider God is saying, "not yet?" How does that change the way you feel when you consider God may be saying "not yet/?"