

Dear Grace Community:

Here we are in week four away from campus and each other. Time continues to be one of the strangest elements of this crisis: sometimes it feels like just yesterday that we left campus, and at other moments it feels like an eternity. I miss all of you a great deal, and the longer we find ourselves apart, I am increasingly grateful to be a part of this loving school community.

Over the last week, I have enjoyed having the chance to attend various class Zoom meetings. What I see and hear in those settings gives me so much joy. There is a community of students thrilled to see one another, a palpable gratitude for teachers and friends, and a willingness to lean into this new way of working and learning together. I am incredibly proud of our faculty for continually growing their own platforms, and of our students and the resilience and strength that comes through in the photos you have shared from home and in our virtual meetups. I am also proud of our parents who are collaborating, teaching, and supporting their children and families in ways that require immense amounts of courage and patience.

As we enter the Easter weekend, I have been reflecting on the messages of this holy time and the place we find ourselves with this pandemic. Just as it must have been for Jesus's many followers when he was put to death, we find ourselves filled with so much fear as this crisis unfolds. And just as with the story of Jesus's resurrection, we are seeing the many signs of renewal and joy all around us. This time has shown me that the light and the dark are always part of one another. We can be filled with fear and anxiety one minute and joy and relief in the next. We can be up at night concerned for loved ones not in proximity to us, and rise in the morning to bright sunshine outside our window. And then there is spring! I don't think I have ever appreciated a spring as much as this one. It is a continual reminder that the darkness will pass and that the cycle of things will continue even amidst something as life-changing and dark as this situation.

One of my favorite writers, Kelly Corrigan, has been hosting Instagram live chats a few evenings a week. On Monday night, she spent a portion of her talk focusing on the notion that no feeling is final. That a sadness, a heaviness, a mood will not be with us forever. Nor will this virus. It isn't always easy to believe that, but I find it comforting to remember right now. I bet you are seeing this come true in the ways your own children are approaching this time at home. They are very likely completely willing to engage with remote learning one minute, and totally unwilling and resistant the next. I wonder if this can be a time for them to learn that we see and respect where they are each moment. And that the low they may be feeling will pass sometime after it visits. It is all temporary.

As we celebrate the miracle of Easter this weekend, may we find some space to remember that where there is great pain, there is also light. And may we also remember that this time away from one another and Grace is a time to consider what we find so valuable about what we have built together in person. I am finding new meaning and joy in seeing the core beauty of our school from afar, here in my home, and ringing through in each Zoom call that unfolds in my

kitchen. May we be renewed in our love of community and may we find joy and true peace with our families during this time.

I am thinking of you all always,

Jen