Scare City (adapted from Moving Out of Scare City by Dr. Marcia McFee, Worship Design Studio)

Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds. — Philippians 4: 6-7

The sense that there is not enough drives greed, fear, and exclusionary behavior. We begin to live in “Scare City” where feelings of being overwhelmed can lurk around every corner. This is an illusion. A spiritual journey into the truth of abundance of all that we need offers us an alternative vision of where to live our lives.

Then they said, “Come, let’s build ourselves a city and a tower that reaches Heaven. Let’s make ourselves famous so we won’t be scattered here and there across the Earth.” God came down to look over the city and the tower those people had built. God took one look and said, “One people, one language; why, this is only a first step. No telling what they’ll come up with next — they’ll stop at nothing…” — Genesis 11: 1-9

More, more, more! Our quest for “more” power, prestige, wealth, and domination have created a culture of oppressive “not enough-ness.” We are overwhelmed, overworked, and overstressed because our perspective of how much we have is skewed by the immensity of what we “ought to have.”

“Don’t fear, because I am with you; don’t be afraid, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, I will surely help you; I will hold you with my righteous strong hand.” — Isaiah 41:10

We are surrounded by messages that encourage feelings of scarcity and fear. What “makes news” bombards us with stories of what might happen to us. Like walking down dark, winding alleyways in Scare City, we fear what might be lurking around every corner.

God, who knows people’s deepest thoughts and desires, confirmed this by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as he did to us. He made no distinction between us and them, but purified their deepest thoughts and desires through faith. — Acts 15 :8-9

In Scare City, people are divided in fear of the “other,” which makes us overprotective fence-builders and hoarders. Rather than offering safety and freedom, we find ourselves trapped as the walls we build to protect become our own prisons

Tell them to do good, to be rich in the good things they do, to be generous, and to share with others. When they do these things, they will save a treasure for themselves that is a good foundation for the future. That way they can take hold of what is truly life. — 1 Timothy 6: 18-19

The irony in Moving Out of Scare City is that we don’t have to pack up and go anywhere. Rather, we are called to transform the places within and around us with the evidence of God’s love and grace. How can we offer radical generosity to transform the places where we are?

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