Encounter

I think when we talk about the word “encounter”, we feel like it needs to be something big—earthshattering, life interrupting—like a burning bush or a blinding Damascus Road moment. And maybe we even think it has to be something that God initiates, something that just happens to us.

But I like to think of encounters in a gentler, more everyday kind of way. Anytime we create space for spiritual growth, anytime something resonates with us, anytime we are enlightened or stretched in our faith, I think that is an encounter with God—just a moment where we stop and connect with God, an intersection of the daily and the divine.

Encounters are personal and varied, and so different people will have different encounters. So while I talk about my encounters, you may have something quite different happen. All are valid and worthy. For some it’s a walk in nature, tuning in to God’s presence and goodness. For others, it’s time spent in Bible study; for others, prayer and contemplation; and for others still, it is experiencing God in community.

I think of my good friends. Do I just wait for them to call me? Do I just hope I run into them somewhere? Or do I deliberately make time and space to spend with them?

Encounters with God can be both big or small, both self or God initiated. But mostly I think we need to be open to these encounters, desire them, seek them, recognize them and accept them.