

Unfair
Quinn G. Caldwell

"I want to see my indictment in writing. Anyone's welcome to read my defense; I'll write it on a poster and carry it around town. I'm prepared to account for every move I've made." - Job 31:36-37

"How could this be happening?" she said. It was a good question. She ate right, exercised regularly, did triathlons, in fact. Never smoked, hardly drank, always applied sunscreen—you know the type. And you know where this is going.

"How could this be happening to me?" she said when the doctor told her about the gnarly leukemia that was eating her alive. Like Job, she wanted a clear cause-and-effect for the terrible thing happening to her. If only she could pinpoint the thing that she'd eaten, inhaled, failed to do or apply to her skin that had caused this, it would all make sense.

But the down and dirty truth is that it doesn't make sense; it almost never does. It's not fair; it almost never is. There's no known cause and effect; there almost never will be.

There's only this: the church member who went with her last week to pick out a wig. The guy from two pews up who's been mowing her lawn for a few weeks now. The Sunday school teacher who said with a set jaw that she was going to keep showing up on the front porch with different foods until they found *something* that tasted good. A room full of people lifting her name up to God every Sunday—and every day in between—no matter what, who will not ever let her go.

Prayer

When it all falls apart, when it's all so unfair, when it just makes no sense at all, thank you, God, for the church. Amen.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Quinn G. Caldwell is the Pastor of Plymouth Congregational Church, Syracuse, New York, and the author of the forthcoming [*All I Really Want: Readings for a Modern Christmas*](#).