

*Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it, Prone to leave the God I love; Here's my heart, O take and seal it, Seal it for thy courts above.*

—“Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing”

All too often during worship, I get to the end of a hymn that I've just sung and realize that I haven't paid any attention to the lyrics. Any of them. I've been on autopilot, belting out the all-too-familiar words, lustily adding harmony to the “Amen” and then moving on to the next part of worship.

But the lyrics of “Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing” pierce my heart, every time. I simply can't be on autopilot when singing what feels like a bold confession: I am not a faithful servant of God. In fact, not only do I stray from the right paths, but I also feel myself straying. How can I sing, “Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,” without getting a lump in my throat? Fortunately, at Episcopal Relief & Development, I take comfort and strength from my colleagues whose lives are dedicated to nurturing and feeding and walking in solidarity with our partners around the globe.

And if I need role models for staying the course, I think of our sisters and brothers throughout the world who overcome great challenges to serve their families, their communities and their God. Who nudges you back on the path? What keeps you from wandering? Who are your spiritual role models?

—Esther Cohen