

Karan was in our backyard with our grandsons and saw this huge spider. She googled it, searching for “black and yellow spider with a zig-zag web.” Guess what the search revealed? The spider is called a black and yellow garden spider and its distinguishing feature, which really identifies it, is the fact that it builds a zig-zag web.

Here we are in the midst of floods and hurricanes, pandemics and polarization of our culture (in about every way imaginable). It feels as if we are living with the question raised in Psalm 11:3, which says, “If the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?” (NRSV)

I go back to the black and yellow garden spider. The rains came and washed away the web. Cue the music to *Itsy-Bitsy Spider*. The spider ran to a safe place ... I guess ... wherever that is for a spider. But when the rains stopped, out popped the spider and started building once again.



I think that is where the people of God are these days. We need to rebuild. We need to rebuild the relationships which God can then use to shape our lives. We can rebuild in order to overcome racism, discrimination, and political division.

We need to rebuild our perspectives and expectations. We need to rebuild our commitment to Christlikeness, to the body of Christ, and to the mission of God in His world. We rebuild.

I go back to the spider once again. Upon further research, it actually goes by a lot of names: Zig-Zag Spider, Writing Spider, Black and Yellow Garden Spider, Corn Spider, and even *Argiope aurantia* (scientific name — I’d love to hear us try to pronounce it). But, even with all of its names, it has one distinguishing mark — the way it builds.

I think about the way we, as the church, build our lives. What is the distinguishing mark of the way we rebuild? It has to be Christlikeness, holiness, holy love. Our lives are built on Christ, the Solid Rock. Jesus is the Cornerstone, the Capstone, the Head. Our lives are built — both personally and collectively — to house the presence of the living God. How we build matters.

How we rebuild matters.

And, we will rebuild. Like the spider, it is in our Christian nature.