

Easter Sunday March 27, 2016

The Dawn of New Beginnings

A Reflection by Peggy Jensen

Prayer: Loving God, we come to celebrate the good news of your Resurrection. This was a new way for the disciples to understand Christ' presence with them. A new beginning for them and for us. Guide us to a new beginning as we work together in this faith community. Open our minds and hearts to understand your directions today. Amen

Mary discovers the tomb is empty. Mary also discovers that Jesus is alive in a new way. An early morning transformation for Mary, and for all those who believe that Jesus is risen. This experience shines in the transfiguring light of the resurrection morning. The good news that Mary reports to the disciples is only the beginning of an ongoing revelation of what the resurrection and its implications might mean. A new beginning. Life with the resurrected Christ. So much has changed, the teacher that they were so committed to following is now expecting his followers to be the leaders.

Go and do for others what I have done for you.

Scholars often remind us that the resurrection narratives are really commission stories, sending believers out into the world to tell everyone that death is not the last word. An unexpected ending is now a beginning---- of telling the truth about life to those who want to deal only with death. Life after death. Hope for the world. Jesus death on the cross leads to life everlasting. That is why we have an empty cross to remind us that Jesus lives again. Jesus lives within us, around us, below and above us. Always with us, always loving and caring for us.

The resurrection story is good news!

We are an Easter people. We live the resurrection story.

What could this mean for us today? The old has passed away and we are here as Easter people ready to live the new life that Christ is leading us to.

Here in this faith community, we have had a powerful journey through Lent. I do not know what you really thought about the stones through Lent, but I was intentionally asking you to consider your relationship within this faith community. Each week you were asked to think about your role and your responsibility. Are you contributing to the health and well-being of this new community? Or are you holding on to resentments, unresolved issues, out-dated expectations that block the way forward? One week we talked about trust. Can you trust your sister and brothers in this faith community? We also looked for the strength to move forward and "get on with this shared ministry!" I hope you have done some soul work through Lent and you are ready to move forward. Today we have cleared away the wall and all that the stones represented.

Let it go!

We are an Easter people who believe in life after death. Is now the time to let the old ways die and rejoice in New Life together? If not now ---- when? This feels like a great opportunity to declare a new beginning. Many of you have expressed a desire to become more blended. You look like you enjoy worshipping together, the singing is great. Every-week we celebrate the same Good News story. I have been offering blended Eucharist or Communion liturgies, which seem to be acceptable. I am combining elements that have meaning for both faith communities. I don't think I am breaking any rules or expectations. When I broke the bread on Maundy Thursday, it reminded me that we are one with Christ. We celebrate the Last Supper together because that is

what Jesus asked us to do. I continue to wonder how often, we do not celebrate a birthday or anniversary of a death every day, but it doesn't mean we don't remember.

Sometimes we do things because it is the way we have always done it! **Why ?**

The more often we can worship together, the more we will feel like one community of faith.

This will be a blessing for all of us. There has been no decision yet to change the schedule for the whole month but it feels like it might be time?

Let's make this Easter Sunday a new beginning here. Let's stop worrying about whether this was too Anglican or too United. Let's try to let go of the labels and how we talk about each other.

It does mean accepting, **really accepting changes**. It means letting go of some of the old ways and making a fresh new beginning. It means working harder to be **One body of Christ**. The Transition Team is listening for your comments. We have received some great ideas and will continue to invite you to conversations that help us know each other and to understand our differences as well as our similarities. We are growing into a new life together.

Easter is a perfect time to begin. Spring is bursting forth all around us. In the Bulb there is a flower and there are so many flowers blooming all over this island. Think about these words of promise for all of us as we make this new beginning together.

***“There's a dawn in every darkness, bringing hope to you and me. From the past will come the future, what it holds a mystery, unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.”
May it be so. Amen***