

Pastor's Note

(parts of this letter come from Easter Sunday's sermon)

Happy Easter, everyone!

After a dark season, the light of new life bursts out all around us. This is part of the story of Easter. When we read the Gospels, we see all four authors sharing a story of finding an empty tomb where they expected to find the dead body of Jesus. All the Gospel writers tell us of intimate friends and disciples having encounters with Jesus after the crucifixion. This, too, is part of the story of Easter.

As we dedicate ourselves to the practice of following Jesus, we follow the early disciples' lead. We hear Mary tell Jesus' disciples: "I have seen the Risen Lord" and in that we hear the invitation to become fully alive.

If we believe that life conquers death, then we must learn to practice resurrection. If we even want to believe that life conquers death and that love conquers hatred and betrayal, then we need to practice resurrection, recognizing, supporting, encouraging new life and new hope wherever we can.

I see stories of resurrection practice and of the refusal to be dominated by fear, despair, grief or hatred. In this congregation there are so many stories that my heart cannot hold them. A woman

with cancer holds on with the toughness of a spiritual prize-fighter. A widow takes her grief and becomes a tireless volunteer for a group and a cause she believes in. An addict finds or maintains sobriety. People unemployed or underemployed volunteer to help around the church and in feeding the hungry. And you can add to that list.

A list of examples of resurrection from an online chat (revgalblogpals.blogspot.com):
Resurrection is when sobriety is achieved. Resurrection is when two countries find a peaceful resolution to differences. Resurrection is when mothers and daughters and fathers and sons embrace. Resurrection is when the post-chemo scan comes back clean. Resurrection is when the resignation letter for the job you can't stand comes off the printer and onto your supervisor's desk.

Resurrection is when a cancer treatment survivor is well enough to WHATEVER...work, play, laugh...again. Resurrection is putting one foot in front of the other and discovering that you're skipping... Resurrection is emerging from the black treacle fog and feeling the sun on your cheek.

Resurrection is when forgiveness heals a wounded relationship between friends. Resurrection is when the phone rings and it's a long-estranged family member or friend. Resurrection is no longer being afraid of the results...no matter what they are. Resurrection is hearing the words "I forgave you already" when you are trying to apologize. Resurrection is when the cold shoulder thaws into a warm embrace.

It takes enormous hope to practice resurrection. But resurrection is God's path. When we make the new life of Easter ours, we open our hearts and our lives to host the unimaginable. We offer hope and renewal to those whom we love as well as to the larger world, a world desperate for renewal.

Transformed by the new life that Easter brings, compassion pushes our apathy out the door; and justice reigns forever and ever. Let's practice the work of resurrection in the world together.

Peace,

Lynn

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