

Peace and blessings to you all during this Easter season.

Thankfully, we live in an age when backspacing and deleting is easy, instead of ripping the paper out of the typewriter and starting again. You see, I started to write, "here we are in week" whatever of our lock-down and physical distancing. But, I don't want to feel that I'm scratching-out the days in groups of five on my cinder-block prison walls. This time of isolation and physical distancing is not a punishment - it is an act of faith. Something we are all doing for the community to help each other. Our Creed reminds us that "we are called to love and serve others... to live with respect in creation." So, I'm not going to dwell on how long it has been. I'm going to give thanks for this day. For everything that Easter means: life, resurrection, promise, and love.

Okay, so I realize that I just told you that I deleted five words, then told you what those five words were, and replaced them with a long explanation of why I'm not using those five words. Hmmm. I guess ministers don't have to be speaking to you in person to be long-winded! I just think that this Easter invites us to let go of looking-back, worrying, or wallowing, and calls us to be in this moment and to open our eyes, ears, hearts, and minds to signs of Easter all around us.

The gospels tell stories of several resurrection appearances. One of my favourites is found in Luke, chapter 24, verses 13 to 35. You should read it again. If you don't have a Bible, Google Bible Gateway... a good resource to see any passage in any translation. I'll wait while you look it up.

Welcome back. Two believers are walking home to Emmaus, a small village about 11 kilometres from Jerusalem. We can imagine that trip. Think about everything that has happened. Heartbreak. Fear. Sadness. Worry. Is it over? Was it worth it? Now what?

Someone joins their journey. They talk. They share their stories. Their sacred story. They put things in perspective. Is it possible that God will be with them even in all of this?

In an act of generous hospitality, they share with a stranger. They break bread together. And something special happens. An Easter moment They know they are not alone. Can we explain what happened? Of course not, because we can't really explain when those moments happen to us. Those moments when we know that we are not alone. Resurrection moments. Dare we say sacred moments. Moments of presence and promise. Moments that assure us that life wins. Moments when a simple act of love and grace transform our everyday into something holy.

Through everything we are experiencing right now, amazing and beautiful things keep happening all around us. Neighbours and strangers being there for each other. We've all heard the stories. We may - I hope - have even experienced some ourselves. These are the moments when we experience abundant life, love in action. Moments of resurrection when the Christ within us shines. As we connect with each other, something bigger happens. Again, life wins.

The two from Emmaus said, "wasn't it like a fire burning within us?" Resurrection moments. Reminders that we are not alone. Every impromptu drive-way concert, every painted rainbow in the window, every phone call, every prayer, every food delivery, every "hi... just thinking about you". Easter moments. The fire burning within us that won't go out.

I find it interesting that the slow walk home seemed long and tiring in Luke's story. But later - after this inspiring experience - they ran back right away to the disciples. The 11 kilometres didn't seem as tough anymore!

Journey on, my friends. Together. Shine. Love. God is with us. We are not alone.

Real love and virtual hugs!

Rev. Steve