Easter 2021

Dear ,

 I remember many springtimes when I’d awaken in the morning, look out the window, and zap. There this green grass would be. Robust, vibrant grass. It seemed like it was an overnight kind of thing, brown one day and bright green the next. This greening always came in the springtimes when we had drenching rains. One year, however, we had very little rain and many more cold days than usual. Each day I looked with hope, expecting to find fresh green pushing its way through the drab wintered spears of dryness. But each day I saw, instead, the same dull color before me.

 Then I looked closely, however, I could perceive little hints of new life and a slight changing in the color of the lawn. I could almost feel the earth straining, trying to draw forth new life from within it. I knew that green would come again, that it would just be a matter of time before warmth and moisture provided the right conditions for change and growth. Eventually, the green did return, but not until I had waited a long time for rain to come and drench the land.

 This process of the earth’s greening after a long winter reminds me of our spiritual “eastering,” the inner transformation and rebirthing that comes after we’ve had a long winter spell of the spirit. The dead, brown grass is there for eons in our hearts, or so it seems. No amount of hurry, or push, or desire can make the green happen any sooner.

 I think of people I know who are longing for an inner greening and are yet in the throes of a spiritual winter: a widow whose husband recently died at a much too early age; a man who is struggling with a new career in midlife and fears his ability to cope with the challenges it requires; the friend whose husband has applied for work far from home and the painful questions it leaves her about what she will do with her own career and friends; a colleague who fell into deep, clinical depression and struggles to live through each day with meager energy. Each one needs an “eastering,” a bright greening and oh, how they long for it to come soon.

 But it may be a painstaking slow process, a tiny bit of life gradually weaving through the pain and questions. Eastering isn’t always a quick step out of the tomb. Sometimes rising from the dead takes a long slowly-greening time. It can’t be hurried.

 It is my hope for you this Easter season that you will trust the resurrection of your spirit, believe that joy and new life will come for you, even though it may not be there for you now. If you are one of the fortunate ones whose soul sings with happy alleluias this Easter, may you turn often to those who are still awaiting their greening and walk hopefully with them.

 As a look out my window at yet another blanket of snow that has fallen, I find myself resonating with Joyce Rupp’s words. In the landscapes of our lives, we each have seasons that need a spiritual rebirthing. In the life of church and community, we need new life to blossom. I pray that in our journey through the landscape of Lent, you may have seen a few blades of green rising up in the midst of the harden brown soil. I pray that your spiritual awakening will continue through these coming days of Holy Week. Join us for services on Thursday and Friday. Take home a Holy Week devotional at the conclusion of our Palm Sunday services. Continue with your “lent in a bag” devotions by picking up week 6 on Palm Sunday and week 7 on Easter.

 Many of you have heard the stories from our Harvey Mission Team that traveled to Houston on the eve of Lent 2018. Once again in 2020 we were faced with another set of challenges. In the words of Joyce Rupp, “If you are one of the fortunate ones whose soul sings with happy alleluias this Easter, may you turn often to those who are still awaiting their greening and walk hopefully with them.” This year our Easter Offerings will be used to assist the rebirth and growth of our brothers and sisters who have been impacted by the pandemic. We will be using all gifts marked as “Easter Mission Offerings” or placed in Easter Envelopes to help alleviate the burden many have faced.

I pray that your journey of Holy Week may empower your awareness of God’s presence through the ministry, death and resurrection of God’s Son, Jesus Christ.

In Christ-Like Love and Service,

Pastor

**Service days and times and details here**