

Small Talk – April 7 2021
Required Facial Covering When in Public – Day 257
By Michael Small

Growing up in the Pacific Northwest, often it was appropriate to utter the childhood phrase “rain, rain go away – come another day!” Forty-three inches of rain does not seem to be extraordinarily high, but for the people of Portland OR it is the number of cloudy days that gets under ones skin – and the sunny days are greatly appreciated – leading to songs like “The bluest skies are in Seattle!”

Many of us were overjoyed to experience an Easter day that came near to breaking record highs for many locations in the Upper Midwest. For me, Easter dinner was eaten with family outside with temperatures near 75 in Shoreview followed by a 3 ½ mile walk through protected shorelines. (And there were no mosquitos) Nature was waking from its winter slumber and walkers, bikers, and families were taking advantage of the day and the weather. Today, equally, we are rejoicing in a cloudy day that has brought rain to our dry and thirsty lands. Soon I will find myself firing up the lawn mower.

Are we awakening? What is it that we are awakening to? Do we awaken to a new day with the realization that this day, this moment has never occurred before. Before us is only opportunity and infinite possibility. A phrase often uttered in scripture and throughout the United Church of Christ who proclaims *a Still Speaking God* – is “God is doing a new thing” – even on this day, even in this moment, even within each of us! Given that language, it is fair to ask, “Am I doing a new thing?” On this very morning are each of us awakening to the possibility of seeing and doing a new thing. Are we able to set aside the restrictions and limitations of past experiences that can bind us up, while at the same time as we are informed by history, to cleanly move into a day, a moment, a time where we are able to do a completely new thing?

Another way of saying this – are we truly and Easter people, a resurrection people. Please note, one doesn’t need to be a “Christian” in order to be a “resurrection people”. Being a resurrection person means living and knowing intimately the cycles, of birth, awakening, living abundantly, dying, and repeating this pattern daily – over and over again.

An image comes to mind – that of the Monarch butterfly that we anticipate coming back to northern Minnesota. “The monarch butterfly, like other insects, has several life forms and stages prior to reaching adulthood. There are four distinct life stages: eggs are laid on plants by the adult female butterfly, larva – the feeding stage (caterpillar), pupa – the transition stage (chrysalis), and adult – the reproductive stage.”

Sometimes in life it feels like we might be stuck in a stage – thinking that life is only manifest and known in that stage. In childhood, I remember wanting to live that way forever – perhaps that was the feeding stage. Moving from childhood to adulthood there

is the transition of growing, being educated, being loved by family, then becoming an adult. Like the butterfly, we experience stages in life that include transitions that startle, surprise, and make life more abundant.

May this cloudy, hopefully rainy day, bring to each of us to do a new thing, to transition into the loving and amazing life we are intended to live.

In the spirit and agape love of Jesus, Michael

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