



It's Time for Easter?

This is Holy Week, though it may not feel like it this year. When the usual ways we remember Jesus' last days on earth as a man, and celebrate his resurrection at Easter, cannot happen as usual, it may be difficult to get into the spirit of the season. It is not Easter egg hunts, Easter baskets and candy, or the chance to wear new Easter clothes that are missing, it is the ability to gather with the community of faith, share worship, share rejoicing, and share remembering that we crave. Many congregations are finding ways to gather remotely through media, or are using other means to stay in touch. In one European congregation, the pastor had every worshiper sent him a selfie which he printed life size and then positioned in their places in the pews. When he shares his messages to the congregation, he does it standing among the pictured congregation. This pastor's creativity brought a smile and a visual reminder to the congregation of God's love and their love for each other. Even so, such creativity cannot replace being together.

Years ago, when 'distance learning' was new and 'Skype' or 'Zoom' were not around yet, a leader in the field introduced the technology to the educators where I worked. She told of using it to talk with a colleague in Japan over several weeks before her first trip to Japan to meet with him in person. As she got off the plane, she greeted him with, "how nice to see you again." He greeted her with, "how nice to meet you." She told us his statement really set her back and made her think. She realized he had a point. Technology is a wonderful tool, but it is no substitute for being together in person. Now, when personal contact is not possible; when keeping your distance may in fact be the most loving thing we can do, these distance friendly tools can help us stay in touch despite their limits. They can be a bit of a life-line between patients and families who must be separated and provide some means of offering support and comfort across distance and across quarantine barriers.

As we deal with these unprecedented times, we need to remember there is a source of comfort and support for all of us that does not require technology. It is in the promise of Easter. There is nothing that can separate us from the love of God (Romans 8:31-39), not even illness or death. It is the love of God and our love for each other, not nationality or technology, or anything else that binds us together! The Easter message is still as strong, as joyful, and as exciting as ever! God loves us so much that he gave his son who took all our sins onto himself and paid for them with his life. Then, with his resurrection, he gave us forgiveness, the promise of eternal life, his peace, and his presence with us always! God did not promise a trouble-free existence, but he does offer his sustaining presence, even in troubled times. It's time for Easter? Yes, this year more than ever! We must face Good Friday, but Easter Sunday *is* coming!

This week, in your prayer time remember:

- All of us as we are facing the coronavirus
- Do not forget the other needs in the world. Violence, hunger, and other needs have not gone away!

Take a Moment to Pray for Peace #92 April 8, 2020 Linda Fry, District Peace & Conciliation Advocate



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