



The United Church of Canada L'Église Unie du Canada

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Easter Greetings from the President of Bermuda-Nova Scotia Regional Council March, 2024

We are an Easter people - We are the people of God.

Sometimes the Season of Lent comes and goes as just another colour or date on our calendars and we hardly give them another thought. Whatever it is we are attempting to do for Lent, hopefully it will prepare us to be able to appreciate the whole Easter experience, which indeed Lent is all about. New life, new hope, the Resurrection and living water.

Just to be, is a blessing. Just to live, is Holy. The Season of Lent takes us to the cross of suffering, redemption and the joy of Resurrection. As we prepare ourselves for this journey, it may well depend upon our own attitude. It is not what I attempt to give up for Lent but rather what I attempt to take on and in what way I attempt to do something more to help, wherever possible.

When Christ came down from the mountain, His resolve strengthened and confirmed, knowing full well that He must follow the way of the cross; to demonstrate for all time the ultimate expression of God's love for the world. This was not an easy decision. Attempting to understand the full impact of what happened on that mountain; perhaps because there is a sense of mystery about it since it is a touch of the divine and we of necessity, live in a very human world.

Perhaps, we should be attempting to look for the divine in our own lives. When we have dreamt, had a vision or an intuition that has helped us to stay the course, to go forward and do what it is that God is calling us to do with our lives, in God's glorious name.

We sometimes need to be reminded that to be human is to go up and down the mountain, to know the heights and the depths! To be Christians, is to have experienced the liberating power of Jesus Christ, which in turn gives us the courage to walk the heights and the depths, in confidence and in hope.

Jesus knew, that one of the most painful aspects of suffering, is the loneliness of it. Others may offer support and empathy, but no one can walk the road to Moriah in Our Place. Christ walked the way of the cross because He knew that at the end, there will be light, and life, and hope.

We too, then, strengthened and transfigured by the power of the living Christ, can come down

the mountain and face what has to be faced, because He has gone before us and is showing us the way. If we sat down and made a list of all the gifts that were and are given to us, it might not be as easy to consider which ones are the most precious. Saint Paul noted:

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing, it is a gift from God. For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish but may have eternal life.”

We worship a God that is loose in the world, who cannot be contained or boxed in. A God that is always in the vanguard, calling us, challenging us, comforting us, walking beside us, in times of joy as well as in times of sorrow; a God who loves and cares for every segment of the world in which we live, move, and have our being!

It is the time for us as Christians, to remember with joy in our hearts, that the cross of crucifixion, is not the end of our Lenten journey but the beginning of a journey that never really ends, from our birth to our death. Easter Sunday assures us that Jesus cannot be contained in a tomb. The Risen Christ is here and now, He is where each of us have doubts, where we live and work, where we search and question. The message of the Resurrection belongs out in the world.

I have come to the realization that we must leave the past behind us and go forward capturing for ourselves a new found sense of joy, hope and faith in being alive in Christ.

All things come alive in the joy of the Resurrection. Thanks be to God!

In Peace and Hope,

Shauna MacDonald

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President

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