



ST. GEORGE'S

ANGLICAN CHURCH

The Oldest Church with the Youngest Ideas

Easter 2023

Dear Friends,

My mind starts racing at night, usually in exact coordination with whatever time I have chosen to try to go to sleep. This happens to many of us at one time or another, but it's been happening to me a lot more lately. When trying to figure out why this is, I couldn't help but think back to the hyper-vigilance and high alert we have been collectively locked into for the past few years. They say that the human body seeks homeostasis—a state of constancy and equilibrium. But if danger becomes the “new normal,” then that becomes the equilibrium to which we adapt. Why does my mind race at night? My best guess is because I have somehow in the past few years gotten used to thinking that the world around us is unsettled, and so my well-trained mind assumes that its job isn't to relax and go to sleep; its job is to scan the horizon for the next danger.

We can't avoid the fact that our bodies, minds and spirits have all been impacted in various ways by COVID, as well as by other personal challenges. Maybe you can relate to my racing mind. Maybe your experience is different. However, I don't want my Easter letter to you this year to be about rehashing these last years of upheaval. A lot of rehashing has already happened, and I expect that there are many experts analyzing just how extensively COVID did impact us. What I do want this Easter letter to be is about hope and gratitude.

Regardless of where our stories have taken us and where we find ourselves now, we have a central shared story where we receive a life-giving response to all of the ups and downs we might encounter along the way. We have in the resurrection of Jesus God's ultimate answer to the pain, anxiety, loss and death that we experience in our creaturely existence. We have God's guarantee, in the risen body of Jesus, that our physical, bodily existence matters to God, that our little lives in these flimsy and fragile bodies are of great value, purpose and beauty to God. We are invited, in Jesus, into God's new creation—into the healing of all of the ways that we have been broken, into the commissioning of how our lives can be participants in revealing the love of God.

In the whole scope of Holy Week we experience a tremendous honesty about all that needs healing, about how life can go sideways, hearts and bodies can get broken, and anxiety and fear can seem to rule the day. At every step along the journey from the Palms at the beginning of the week to the empty tomb at the end, we see touchstones of God's beauty and love shining through the cracks of our human lives—whether it's in the love Jesus keeps extending to his confused and disloyal friends, in the witness of a supper table and the fellowship around it even as the forces of darkness are closing in, in the act of service in Jesus' washing his friends' dirty and tired feet, or in the courageous acts of friendship and love bestowed on Jesus in his own moments of greatest grief. Throughout Holy Week, we see God's response to human fear and loss not just in the miracle of Jesus' rising from the dead, but also in the life of the community called together in Jesus' name.

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By night, my mind races, and that tells me something about where we have been over the past couple of years. By day, my ministry with you, the people of St. George's, tells me something too. I see and hear your stories of hurt and loss. I also see, and am blessed, by the love that shines through your lives, by the courage and hope that you live—in both small and enormous ways—in the world. The feeling that I can't help getting as we gather once again in worship in the "thin space" that is our sanctuary is that we really are guests at God's great banquet, and the healing and love and new life God has offered us is happening in us. Right here and right now.

Our ancestors in faith, who passed along to us this church and the witness of all that God has promised to us, also knew racing minds and anxious times. Holy Week is our invitation to bring our whole lives, our faults and failings, our worries and fears, to that promise, to be renewed again in the story of how we have been healed and called to new life, to walk together rather than alone.

Yours in Christ,

The Reverend Canon Martha Tatarnic +

Holy Week Services

April 2nd – Palm Sunday – 8am & 10am – 10am Children's Liturgy

April 3rd-5th – Noon Hour Services each day

April 6th – Maundy Thursday – Last Supper & Foot Washing – Noon and 7pm

April 7th – Good Friday – 9:45am Good Friday Walk, beginning at 95 Church Street

Noon Hour Service at St. George's

April 8th – Easter Vigil 7pm – From Death to Life

April 9th – Easter Morning, 8am & 10am

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