

So What Is Going On?

April 4, 2024

A communication from Cherokee Presbytery

Some years ago, I heard a pastor friend say the Monday after Easter – “We made it!” It was more of a tired sigh than an affirmation, but the message was the same. With the hustle and bustle and weeks of preparation in preparing for Lenten services just 7 weeks after Christmas and mid-week meals and Holy Week activities and Easter Egg hunts disrupted by rain and sunrise services and special musicians cancelling due to sickness and finding replacement trumpet players and the internet having to download an update and That things could finally go back to normal. Normal Sunday services. Normal weekly activities. Normal calendar planning. Calm. Peaceful. Normal.

All of his emotion made me remember a cartoon I saw on Facebook the previous year – check the date:



What we have learned since the Pandemic is that we are living in a new normal. What was normal before is no longer, and our reality now is the new normal. Which results in one of two approaches. We can grieve what was and continue to long for it, or we can look for new ways and opportunities to see God at work in our midst. The first option may be easier, as it really requires nothing of us. But I think

the second option is more faithful.

When the women went to the tomb in Mark's Gospel, one of their concerns had to do with "normal" customs and practices. They were worried about who would roll away the stone at the entrance. Waiting for the Sabbath to end so that they weren't in violation of the requirements. Prepared to anoint the body with spices. Normal things.

And what they got was anything but normal. The stone already removed. The body not there. A young man dressed in white, telling them to go tell the others. To go to Galilee because Jesus is already there waiting for them. A new normal awaits. New possibilities for God's activity are calling.

This week's Gospel text with Thomas as a central character gives us a similar message (in one way – there are a lot of messages). But one that I hear is that Christ continues to break through walls and call His disciples to greater faith. Greater possibility.

It is my hope and prayer that we will lean into the new normal. The new possibilities. The new opportunities that God has in store for us. It's easier to sit back and reminisce about what was. But Jesus has gone before us, is calling us to meet Him there, is inviting us into a new normal that is teeming with potential for new ways to live into the Kingdom.

May it be so. Peace.
Andy

**A Season of Rebuilding -
Come Hear About Upcoming Changes to the Board of Pensions**

Clark Simmons will host two gatherings for Pastors and Congregational Leaders about the upcoming changes to the Board of Pensions plan. Personnel committee members are also invited to attend. The meetings will both be held on Thursday, May 2, 2024, in the Glover Room at First Presbyterian in Marietta, GA. The meetings will be held at 10:00 am and 2:00 pm that day. Please RSVP by Monday, April 29, 2024 to Sarita Morris by email sarita@cherokeepresbytery.org or call 770-382-6280.

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