

BLESSINGS ALWAYS

November 9, 2022

Association Minister Message

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NEW. “For I am about to create *NEW* heavens and a *NEW* earth; the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind.” (Isaiah 65:17). People around the world are struggling financially, emotionally, and spiritually. There is mistrust of each other because of differing opinions. In this election season, the misinformation, hatreds, and ugliness of physical and emotional fighting is causing disrespect for one another. Even in church communities there are disagreements that cause divisions and forming of alliances that name each other as evil and sinful. It seems that Christians are their own worst enemies.

The words from Isaiah remind of us of how bad life can be and yet there is hope, there is something that God creates that is *NEW*. The prophet’s people were returning from exile and all they could see was destruction of what was and wondering what could be. The prophet reminds his people that God is about to create something *NEW* in them and “*the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind.*” God is giving people hope that there will be restoration, a time of joy, life, and rebuilding. Reflecting on Isaiah’s words, Theologian Dr. Walter C. Bouzard states, “*Economic inequalities and unjust distribution of resources is a growing problem in the so-called developed world, and it is a problem of long standing for developing nations.*” Dr. Bouzard reminds us that Isaiah’s words include a condemnation of status quo. As the Hebrew people returned home and began restoring their nation, they were to live God’s justice with one another. Isaiah’s time is much like our time: “*former things*” stall or prevent the creation “*of NEW heavens and a NEW earth.*” Evil has its trickery; relationships are disrupted; hope is lost.

The Good News is that God promises the “*NEW heavens and NEW earth.*” God declares, “*Before they call I will answer, while they are yet speaking I will hear.*” (vs. 24). God forgives and forgets the evilness of the past and offers unlimited possibilities into God’s *NEW* future. Our struggles and divisions do not have the final say. Like the Hebrews even at their worst, God love us and creates in us *NEW* joy, *NEW* love, and transformed lives. Be open to the indwelling Spirit of God in *NEW* ways. *BLESSINGS ALWAYS.*