

EASTER MORNING  
MARCH 31 2013

JOURNEY THEME....USING MATTHEW

Christ is risen! (He is risen indeed!)

This is a day for great rejoicing: for song, for poetry, and for mystery.

Listen to this: Hamlet to Guildenstern: *“How unworthy a thing you make of me – you would pluck out the heart of my mystery”*.

Whatever else I do in this sermon  
whatever else WE do in this service  
let us not make so unworthy a thing of this day that we pluck out the heart of its  
mystery.

The triumph of life over death... of hope over despair.... of love over .....everything  
the resurrection of Jesus

it strains the borders of language; it traces new connections through the pathways of not  
only our public and private lives but through our very brains...new pathways!  
and it calls from an empty tomb to have us open ourselves to the deeper reality vibrating  
behind the story, shining from the text and from the universe itself. Christ is risen, he is  
risen indeed! It is true. And it is a mystery.

I invite you into mystery.

And - onto a road – a way – that will take us to places we thought impossible, with  
unexpected companions on the road, and the dawning realization that the destination for  
which we've been longing and dreaming is very real; and is not some pie in sky by and  
by when we die but rather it here and now....

The road we travel has been long and winding. It still is....Rocky, if you will.... but  
now....this is more than a sharp bend in the road, more than a bump on the way....this –  
this forces us to a screeching halt. We stop, we look down, and there before us a new  
road – and we veer off, into unforeseen terrain, sometimes breaking trail, sometimes  
honouring the dusty feet of those who have travelled it before us,

I invite you to look down....and see the road you travel.

the soil beneath our feet

that soil is rich, fairly singing with its ancient secrets

and the very stones on our pathway are shouting as he said they would.

Remember? As he rode into town on Palm Sunday (was that only a week ago??) they sang hosanna. The authorities told him to make his disciples stop all the noise. Silence (that kind of silence – I know there is the other, the deep silence of connection and prayer – I'm talking about the kind of silence the authorities tried to command) silence always serves the status quo – silencing is a very effective way to shut down a revolution, or a resurrection. Silence. Not good. Noise – that's good. They said “*tell your disciples to be quiet*” He looked at them, singing their hearts out and said – *that's not gonna work! even if I did the very stones would sing!* And that's what they're doing today. The stones are singing. What are they singing? *I can't get no satisfaction?* NO! Wrong stones. No – they're singing quite the opposite. They're singing praise. They're singing about the satisfaction of life in the Spirit, life with purpose, life shining with hope and the holiness of it all. The same song they sang with the rest of creation at his birth:

*Glory to God in the highest and on earth – peace, and good will to all.*

Stones – singing for all they're worth - millions of them, made of the earth, formed by fire and time....littering the road  
where did they come from, these singing stones?

Matthew says that at the moment of resurrection, there was an earthquake. The whole earth shook, and broke open. Isn't that a great image? The earth breaks open and what do we see? We see the inside of boulders hidden for who knows how long in the mud. We see them shining the way rocks do when their insides are revealed. Humans, too. The earth, broken open and beautiful  
creating paths where none had been, or had been perceived.

And another stone – a big one, gets rolled away  
and Life prevails. And hope wins. And the way of peace and justice....cannot be silenced. The stone is rolled away. Jesus is alive and the stones break into another chorus.

I had an email conversation this week with someone who was reflecting on the stones in her life journey and how many of them there were. And, she said, how many of them had had been rolled away by friends. The stones littering the road now, not boulders insurmountable but broken into pieces and kicked away. Kicked away from the tombs of our lives, kicked away by faithful feet, rolled into the road, and now they form a choir. The original rock and roll.

Myriad stones in this world that seem to entomb our brothers and sisters  
systems and laws that keep them enslaved  
attitudes and apathy that say yea we'd love to, but those stones just can't be moved – we don't have the equipment  
malnourished thought patterns and anemic imaginations that cannot see a new heaven

or a new earth  
or the glory of this one made new by love  
a society where we are mired up to our very guts in the mud of our past and old  
paradigms

all of those stones – broken open by resurrection power, then  
are rolled pushed and kicked away by faithfulness.

Kicked into the road, where they form a choir and sing the halleluia chorus

Kicked by faithful feet who will not stand by and see others entombed. People who put  
on stone kicking resurrection boots and just get the job done – who reach out in tiny and  
huge gestures of love and friendship and persistent, stubborn, resurrection hope.

My hope and prayer for all of us today  
is that we'll put on our stone kicking boots and practice resurrection.  
The power of life and love and justice and peace is real; it is stronger than the forces that  
try to betray and twist and defeat them  
Jesus is alive and the power of love has prevailed.  
The stones on the road of our lives now? They're stones rolled away, broken apart by  
love  
and they sing out  
a song of glory and a call to join the parade.  
The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof  
and you're part of it all.

I don't know what your life is like today  
if the road you walk is rocky....  
I don't know if you are feeling entombed, defeated by the boulders blocking your way  
I don't know if you are lonely or afraid or needing a friend  
I don't know if your ashamed or guilty or needing to find a new path....  
Or perhaps you are at a good and positive part of the pathway that is your life and you're  
here to say thank you; to find a way to connect even more deeply  
only you know what's in your heart today.

What I do know is this:  
Jesus is alive forever  
and loves you with a love that is beyond imagining. There is life for you. Life and love  
and a new beginning. A family – to walk with you and hope for the future whatever that  
future may be.  
A family centered on Jesus, whose way of radical welcome and acceptance will never  
die. You're welcome here – you're welcome in God's resurrection world

We've got a pair of resurrection boots in just your size  
so when you're ready, you can help to kick some stones away  
And there's a chorus of stones singing a new world into existence  
and I hear they've got room for another voice.

Christ is risen – he is risen indeed  
and all the people said amen.