



grow. pray. serve.

Reveille UMC Weekly Guide

April 5-11, 2021

Sermon by Lead Pastor Pete Moon

SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

Sermon Title: "A New Start"

Notes from sermon on 4/04:

To pray for this week:

Family Focus Question

What would you like to change about yourself as we rise up out of this pandemic?

Questions for Small Groups

1. Both readings this week show pictures of people looking back to the "former things".
Are there things you look back upon that keep you from seeing
a new thing to which God is leading?
2. If you are honest, have you become accustomed to life in a pandemic?
Are there things you fear changing when this is over?
3. Has God used this year to implant a "new thing" in your soul? What is it?

Monday, April 5: Read Isaiah 43:16-21

Christ is Risen! Hallelujah! There is much to celebrate as we enter the first week of Easter, and much that we anticipate will soon be "resurrected" – school schedules, restaurant re-openings, social gatherings, travel. We eagerly await so many of these. At the same time, however, there may be many things we don't want to have return to "normal." Through our individual and collective pain and grief in the past year, we might have grown in our realization and conviction that some things need to be left behind, making way for a new start – something better.

This week we take a departure from the common lectionary to explore scriptures that guide us in this exciting, yet often scary season of rebirth and re-emergence. Today's reading from Isaiah gives us the comfort in knowing that though we may be, God is not afraid of doing a new thing, even when we have fallen short and made mistakes. We always have the opportunity for a new start.

As we continue to crawl our way out of this pandemic on this first week after Easter, let us claim this truth of our God who welcomes us into a new beginning. What do we want to do differently in this coming new start and what do we want to leave behind in the wake of COVID?

Tuesday, April 6: Read John 21:15-19

Not everyone was proud of how they behaved in the time before the resurrection. Peter was one of them. If we recall, Peter denied Christ three times before the cock crowed, so he was naturally nervous and full of shame when meeting the risen Christ. Instead of losing his purpose and place in God's plan, however, Jesus reinstated Peter as his "rock," asking "do you love me?" before giving the simple commandment, "Feed my lambs." Not all of us are proud of everything we have done in the past year. We may not like the place where we are right now. Today's scripture shows us that we belong to a risen Christ who is calling us with open arms to redemption, rebirth, and purpose. Are we ready to leave the past behind and step into this new season of purpose with Christ?

Wednesday, April 7: Read Lamentations 3:19-24

God knows that we can't just act like nothing bad has happened. We have suffered true loss, including within our own congregation. Letting go of the past doesn't mean burying it and pretending we don't feel the pain. "I remember my affliction and my wandering" the author of Lamentation writes, and we agree. "Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope: because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning..." What can it be like to wake up "new every morning" in the steadfast love, compassion, and hope in God? What needs to be made "new" in our mornings and lives now?

Thursday, April 8: Read Colossians 3:1-14

There are many things we may want and need to leave behind as we reemerge from this pandemic. There are habits we never want to return to, both ones that existed before March of 2020 and ones we have acquired since then. What needs to be "put to death" so we can have the new life Christ wants us to enjoy? Who do we need to forgive, including ourselves? What do we know is not working and stands in our way of joyfully living in the kingdom? What exciting possibilities lie ahead once we have "taken off [our] old self with its practices and have put on the new self"?

Friday, April 9: Read 2 Corinthians 5:16-21

As we reemerge from this pandemic, today's scripture tells us that we are Christ's ambassadors, "as though God were making his appeal through us." We know there is much healing needed in our community. People are isolated, families financially devastated, children falling behind in learning, and everyone disoriented. We have work to do. Let us all embrace the joy, power, and excitement of a church that can rise together from the past year stronger and more committed than ever to heal the sick, feed the lambs, and make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Saturday, April 10: Scripture Memorization: Isaiah 43:18-19

"See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland." (NIV)

Sunday, March 11: Let us prepare our hearts and minds for worship in praying our Prayer of

Common Confession: *Gracious Lord, this day you have called upon us to "forget the former things." We confess that all too often we hold on. The past represents our security and we turn to it instead of trusting in you. Remind us this day, O Lord, that your work is not limited to the past but that you yet have great plans for us. Give us your vision of hope and newness, for we ask it in the name of Jesus. AMEN*