

Winfield United Church Reflection: Easter April 12, 2020

## **Looking for Resurrection**

John 20:1-18

In the early morning, of the first day of the week, in the light before dawn, she grabbed her coffee to go, a hot cross bun and left with great haste. She drove uphill, past still-sleeping neighbors, encountering, only in passing, the odd soul out walking with their four-legged companion. There was only one thing that mattered at this moment... only one thing that could be important at this early hour. And only place she could imagine herself being.

Car parked, necessities collected, she set out up the final hill, a short climb to the place she believed it would happen, from Spy Hill. The Sabbath preparations now complete: the reflections, the prayers all written, the emails replied, the zoom gatherings scripted... all have brought her to this place. There was not a tomb in sight, only boulders cast aside. She laid her blanket on the rock, unwrapped her breakfast and sipped her coffee while she watched and waited.

How long would it take before it made its presence known, she wondered. How long before she would notice it... would it be like other years... standing in the cemetery surrounded by the saints that have gone before? Huddling in the small group with other watchers, trying to break the bitter cold spring wind that blew over and around the group in the midst of waiting... as they looked for the living among the dead. It would be quick, a few words, a hymn or two, and pray. Yes they'd pray for Easter... for the things they were sure of and things they doubted. That's the glory of the day, to do these things, to come with an Alleluia on the lips or maybe not this year. It's different this time... so very different. COVID 19 changed so many things, cancelled the celebrations,

authorities directing one and all to just please stay home and be safe. But still she would pray.

This journey feels anything but safe. But it's necessary. She needed to stand in that place and watch, to know that her grief, her waiting was not in vain, that it counted for something. And then it happened... the moment she had been waiting for sitting on cold rock, coffee long gone... at first, a speck of light... then the sure and certain glow from behind the hill... and slowly, assuredly, it began to rise... becoming brighter, more pronounced, taking shape. And spreading warmth through the early morning's cold air. This is what she came for... she had found it once again... to greet the Easter morning Sun... her empty tomb, her resurrection moment.

The beauty of it all... how can it be captured? With a phone, to save on the camera roll for prosperity? Or will it just be another sunrise photo along with all the others. It can't be... can it? It's a COVID 19 Easter sunrise, for God's sake. This counts for something. It has to be somehow more hopeful than yesterday's sunrise or the day's before that.

Hope! Yes, that's what she has made the journey for this Easter. Everywhere she went this week, she heard the old story of scripture echoed through the stories of others... of staying home in upper rooms, fears of what might lie on the other side of the door, of longings, of disappointment. But she also shared in stories of hope and promise, of having zoom gatherings to stay connected, a hello how are you from the other end of the telephone, to hear those old new words of assurance, we shall overcome, regardless of race or creed, for this virus does not play favorites. Her resurrection moment reminded her that hope rises for a new day. A day to be reminded that love wins... not the fickle kind that has its season. But the kind of love that lasts beyond the grave, from this life to the next.

Now it's time for her to pack up, to be on her way, to leave no trace. The world is awakening. She is expected... for she has Good News to share. He is not here. He has risen. Alleluia, Alleluia.

Amen and Amen.