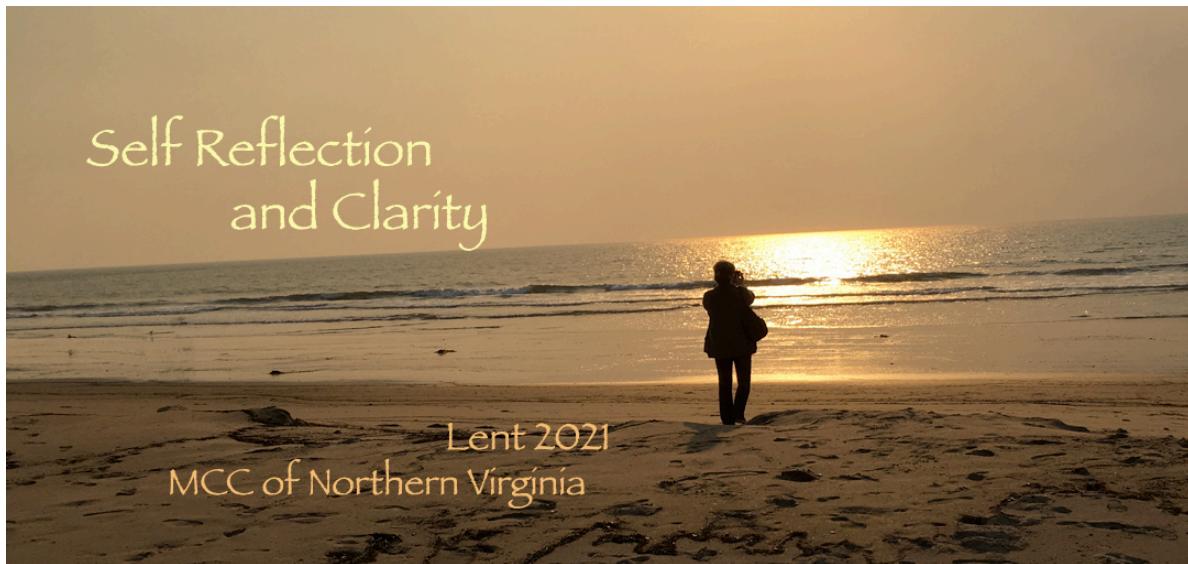


February 28, 2021

Second Sunday in Lent



Making Change

**Rev. Emma Chattin
Preaching**

First Reading ~ *First Reading: John 2:13-22*

Since it was almost the Jewish Passover, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the Temple, he found people selling cattle, sheep and doves, while money-changers sat at their counters. Making a whip out of cords, Jesus drove them all out of the Temple — even the cattle and sheep — and over-turned the tables of the moneychangers, scattering their coins. Then he faced those who were selling the doves: “Take all this out of here! Stop turning God’s house into a market!” The disciples remembered the words of scripture, “Zeal for your house will consume me.” The Temple authorities intervened and said, “What sign can you show us to justify what you’ve done?” Jesus answered, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” They retorted, “It has taken forty-six years to build this Temple, and you’re going to raise it up in three days?” But the temple he was speaking of was his body. It was only after Jesus had been raised from the dead that the disciples remembered this statement and believed the scripture, and the words that Jesus had spoken.

Second Reading ~ *adapted from Barbara Brown Taylor in “An Altar in the World: A Geography of Faith”*

“Surely God is present in this place, and I did not know it!” When those words came out of Jacob’s mouth, there was no temple in Jerusalem. Without one designated place to make their offerings, people were free to see the whole world as their altar. The Divine could erupt anywhere and when it did they marked the spot in any way they could, although there was no sense hanging around for long, since God stayed on the move. For years and years the Divine Presence was content with a tent, which was not where God lived full time but where God camped out with people who were also on the move. The tent suited God just fine for

hundreds of years, so well, in fact, that when King David proposed giving God a permanent address, God balked. “Are you the one to build me a house to live in?” God asked. So David did not build God a temple. His son Solomon did, however, and from that day forth God’s address was Mount Zion, Jerusalem. Even today, two ruined temples later, people from around the world still go to Mount Zion to tuck their prayers into the foundation stones of God’s old home.

As important as it is to mark the places where we meet God, I worry about what happens when we build a house just for God. Do we build God a house so that we can choose when we go to see God? Do we build God a house in lieu of having God stay at ours? Plus, what happens to the rest of the world when we designate a place? What happens to the riverbanks, the mountain tops, the deserts, and the trees? What happens to the people who never show up in our handmade houses of God?