



Where is the NEW in this New Year?

From Nayiri Karjian, General Minister, Living Water Association, Ohio NorthEast, UCC | January 6, 2021

Happy new year. What is new about it?

This year perhaps more than any other I want the new year to be really NEW. But, what makes something new? What does the new look like? Is there really anything new in this life on this earth?

January 1, 2022 did not make anything new. I woke up to the same old routine and same old pandemic, to the same old news of death and violence, fires and snow storms, to the same issues for living, and more. So where is the new year? Where is the NEW?

I find it interesting that the longer I live the less NEW I see. After all, in my days on earth I have lived through many NEWs and FIRSTS. But after 30-40 years or so there are not many NEWs. Could it be that the author of Ecclesiastes is right when he writes, "there is nothing new under the sun?"

If so, why do we humans, although clutching the familiar, seek the NEW and look forward to new moments, new experiences, new ideas? Why are we inspired with innovation, creativity and originality? I wonder if this seeking for the NEW is about the longing for life to be different, easier, less complicated, more joyful and meaningful?

Where is the NEW in this world where nothing is new yet every moment is new? Every moment is new because it never was before and never will be again. Each moment is new, unique, original, in a given context at a given time. It will never repeat or be the same again.

During the three Holy Days of our Christian faith we celebrate the NEWness and the NEW. During Christmas

we longingly celebrate the birth of joy, love, peace and hope because those are new in our old world where misery and hate, despair and chaos abide. Baby Jesus, the embodiment of love, hope, joy and peace, the incarnation of Love and Grace, born in the manger of our hearts nurtures those seeds into fruition.

During Easter we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus recognizing that life overcomes death, that life has the last word, that life is always new, that healings, rebirths and new beginnings are always possible. During Pentecost we celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit recognizing that the Spirit can turn death to life, despair to hope, cowardice to courage, as she waters the seeds of the fruits of the Spirit within us so we may become and create the new.

I suggest that the new is within us, in Baby Jesus who is born in the manger of our hearts. I suggest that the new is in our worldview, our perspective, the eyes through which we see the world - eyes of grace and gratitude, eyes of love and compassion. When we see life as a gift, we see the new. When we see love as our purpose, we live the new. When we see grace as our path for living, we walk the new.

So, nurture those seeds within you, claiming the new, and find the new in the new year!

TO AUTHORIZED MINISTERS:

To discover this NEW, to take time to nurture the seeds within us, to water them, to tend to them we invite all Authorized Ministers to a retreat to Rest, Restore, Rekindle, scheduled for Jan 24-25, led by Kelly Brill and Luke Lindon. There are a few open spots left. For more information and to register go to: <https://livingwaterone.org/events>