

Reflection April 20 – Easter Sunday 2025 – Resurrect Us Past Fear

Inspired by Luke 24:1-12

“This, I believe, is the real danger of our time. Not anger. Not sorrow. But detachment. A giving up. A slow surrender to disconnection.”

These words were shared in a post by our Executive Minister at the Pacific Mountain Regional Council Office, Treena Duncan, in a post last Thursday. She is speaking about the numbness that can become a human condition, when there is just too much for us to cope with.

We all have a limited amount of coping power, and when that is exhausted, we can become detached from the world. Treena believes that is happening now; to many of us in Canada, many in our churches, and many in our communities.¹ We are well and truly stuck in the doldrums. And between tariffs, counter-tariffs, and rhetoric about our possible annexation with the US, many of us have gone past anger to fear. And fear numbs our consciousness.

Fear is not a good place to be. Fear keeps us off balance. Fear lowers our resilience. Fear promotes disengagement, anxiety and depression. Fear is why Peter denied Jesus three times. Fear is what Jesus' crucifixion was all about. Fear tried to tell the disciples what would happen to them if they followed Jesus. Fear was the Roman trump card, “look what we will do if you step out of line.” And, for good reason, I think fear is where a lot of us are today.

In response to being fearful, we are likely to become more and more detached from things that can renew our spirit and keep us hopeful. Easter offers us an opportunity for optimism and confidence. Easter can foster courage in our lives.

In her message Treena wrote, “Easter comes not only as a celebration—but as a call. A call to reengage. To feel again. To hope again. To risk joy again. Because Christ is risen—not only in the bright places, but in the broken ones too. And that resurrection promise pulls us toward life.”

I wrote an article to the local paper the other day that some you may have seen. One of the things I mentioned is that I see resurrection every day. I don't see it in the effigy of Christ clothed in brilliant light, but in Christ's presence within and among us. That presence is the personification of the tenacity of the human spirit. It is the determination to go through and past the pain and anguish, in the belief that something new and better will prevail. It is the resolve to “stay the course” despite the hardships, pitfalls and disappointments. And most difficult of all, it is the conviction that we must move forward through sorrow and grief. We need to move past our fear to do that.

That doesn't in any way mean to diminish or trivialize the real fears that haunt us on a daily basis. The fear someone we love may suffer a life altering illness or accident. The fear that we might lose employment or savings. The growing fear of what might happen to Canada under the existing US Administration. The fear of facing our own death.

We read that Jesus didn't fear death. His death was predicted, and he was prepared for it. However, I can't imagine even Jesus, in his humanity, not being fearful of the physical pain that he would endure at the hands of the Romans.

We can't shut off our fear response. Fear is a natural human reaction to something in the environment that we know might harm us. Fear serves us well in many cases.

But living in fear is another matter. That is debilitating, unnerving, and unhealthy. That was exactly the Roman's plan in Jesus' time. Keep everyone fearful and stay in control. Unfortunately for

¹ Treena Duncan, Executive Minister, Pacific Mountain Regional Council, personal email, April 17, 2025

them it didn't last. Soon a groundswell of Jesus followers would peek out from behind closed shutters. They would meet in secret. Eventually they would gain confidence and speak out. Fear was cast aside, and Jesus would be resurrected once more.

That is the story we must remember and retell this Easter Day. In spite of those that would want to control the world through fear, we must rally and live the Jesus story.

To share once more from our Executive Minister's Easter message, Treena urges, "This year, I pray that we don't skip past the sorrow. That we don't deny the wilderness we've walked. But that we also don't stay there. Because Easter invites us to a deeper joy—one that isn't shallow or performative but rooted in the whole story. A joy that's been cracked open by grief. A joy that sings because it has wept."²

Easter morning some years ago a great tragedy was righted, a miracle occurred. Through tears of shock at the betrayal and loss of their mentor and friend, the women who had arrived at the tomb received a great gift, hope. Jesus' body was not there. The crazy, impossible truth, "**He is not here but has risen.**"^[d] Joy filled their hearts and they ran as fast as they could to tell the others.

And since that time millions of us have believed in the truth of that story. It has been the mantra of generations. Those that have lived through two world wars, and those who are unjustly sacrificial pawns in the conflicts between ego driven world leaders now. The impoverished whom toil endlessly to fuel the desires of the wealthy. The refugees that cling to the tiniest of hopes of a new beginning for their families.

Today migrants go to sleep fearing deportation. Same sex couples fear imprisonment. Women in some countries fear arrest, detainment and beating because they say no to male dominance. Individuals and families fear they will not have enough to eat. The unhoused fear sleeping in the cold, the addicted fearful of a tainted injection.

There are many who live through fear, it is rampant, possibly as much today as it has ever been. That, at least in part, is why the Easter message is so vital.

The hope by some that goodness, kindness and generosity could be silenced by fear failed. Those who believed they were in total control would be surprised. The manipulators, coercers and the corrupt would some day be held accountable.

That has to be our story this Easter day. Truth rises from the tomb. Love is renewed. Hope walks away from the grasp of those that would silence it.

Joy rose with the dawn that Easter morning long ago. Joy visits us this day and we are resurrected past our fear into great hope.

Thanks for listening today.

Amen

² Treena Duncan, Executive Minister, Pacific Mountain Regional Council, personal email, April 17, 2025