

Reflection for June 22, 2025 - What Time Is It? Inspired by Isaiah 43: 18-21, Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

In his day the prophet Isaiah said God was about to do a new thing. He was speaking to the Israelites in Babylonian exile. The time is coming soon, Isaiah says, when there will be water in the wilderness, drink to quench the thirst of the chosen people.

I'm thinking it is about time God did a new thing again, today, right now. I say that as I rage about the most recent US bombings in Iran. We are all holding our breath at what may arise from this outrageous, unprovoked attack against a sovereign nation. I'm angry that our southern bully is at it once more.

And I wonder, God is it possible you can do a new thing?

If you follow the Nostradamus predictions (which I don't really) you will read that he predicted 2025 would be filled with climate upheavals. He also predicted that man and machine would become one, which sounds a lot like AI to me. There is reference to "broken allies" and "brothers turned enemies," which is essentially the status of strained international relations.¹

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You all have heard of the Doomsday Clock? Well, today apparently it is 89 seconds to midnight—the closest it has ever been to catastrophe. That is apparently up one second from last year. The Science and Security Board remarked, "Our fervent hope is that leaders will recognize the world's existential predicament and take bold action to reduce the threats posed by nuclear weapons, climate change, and the potential misuse of biological science and a variety of emerging technologies."²

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That is a fair question to ask and one which all ponder. It is especially important for new ministry candidates to consider.

I had the pleasure of interviewing a couple of them this past week. At the outset one wants to pose the question, "are you guys nuts?" Churches are closing all over the place, attendance is way down in most Communities of Faith, fewer and fewer people are interested in organized religion at all. Why do you want to serve, especially when we cannot even predict what the United Church will look like in just a few years?

Most times new candidates are second or third career people (like I was). And you wonder, you are going to leave the security of the job you have now for a career in ministry? Perhaps we should offer a free brain scan as part of our selection process.

¹ [Nostradamus' Predictions 2025: War, Climate Change, And Technological Advances](#), Nostradamus' Predictions 2025: War, Climate Change and Technological advances, accessed June 21, 2025

² [2025 Doomsday Clock Statement - Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists](#), Bulletin of The Atomic Sciences, Closer Than Ever: It is Now 89 Seconds to Midnight, accessed June 21, 2025

Well frankly it wouldn't matter. During this last interview session, the "Office of Vocations Minister," who is in charge of this portfolio, told us she has at the moment twenty-two (twenty-two) enquirers who want to seriously discern if they might enter the ministry. And that is just here in BC.

Have they not been watching the news, reading the UC magazine Broadview or visiting some of our COF's?

The answer to the above is yes they have, they are well informed. And, these are intelligent people, worldly wise in most cases. And in the majority of times, these are individuals with a lot of life experience. They are not fools. So, what's up?

I think I have an inclination. In all of these potential candidates, God is about to do a new thing. The Holy Spirit is drawing them into a love affair. And I can tell you from my own experience there is no escape. Do you ever wonder how it was that those Jesus called from their boats to join him in ministry, simply left everything and followed? That was how it happened then and that is how it happens now.

And my reason for telling you this story is that it is happening now in this place. God is doing a new thing here and now as we speak. God is doing a new thing in you. You are here because you dare to defy the odds of the Doomsday Clock. You are here because, while you hear Nostradamus' predictions, you refuse to acknowledge this to be truth. You know better, your vision is clear, your pathway to your own unique and gifted discipleship is cast. It is a love affair you cannot avoid either.

In every greeting you make, every smile you offer, every cookie you bake. In every bell you ring, every bank deposit you make and every account you balance. In every bag you sort, every bulb you replace and every lick of paint you apply upon a wall. In every note you play or sing, in all the joy and laughter shared, in every prayer offered, God is doing a new and wonderful thing. The call of discipleship is infectious among you.

Alas, the new thing God calls us to do sometimes takes us down a different path.

The wisdom offered us in the book of Ecclesiastes tells us things change even in the kin-dom. There are seasons and times when we are called in different directions. Indeed ***"For everything there is a season and a time for every matter under heaven."***

God is doing a new thing with me letting me know that it is time to step away from this pulpit, a place I have grown so comfortable being in the last 9 years. A place where I have been so incredibly honoured to serve. She is telling me it is time to step aside and retire from active ministry. Peachland is a wonderful, energetic and vital ministry she says, it is time they did something new. They can do it.

God has something new instore for me. A little more relaxed pace and an opportunity to seek further spirit wisdom and study, as I immerse myself in what is called a "Soul Guiding Program."

I will be here until the end of June next year so don't cast lots for my stoles just yet. In the interim you will have lots of time to plan for your bright and exciting future. And we will have more time to see what new thing God has in store for us. However, when you

do set up a job description for a new minister, please remember that your number one criterion is a good sense of humour.

There will be time down the road for me to express my sincere gratitude for allowing me to be your pastor these nine years. For now, let me just say it has been an incredible honour to be in ministry with you all and I look forward to continuing in that role throughout this next year.

God is doing a new thing this day and every day. Thanks be to God, Creator, Holy Presence and Holy Love.

Thank you and bless you all for listening this morning. Amen