

The Joyful Call of Our Day

Surely this is the best time to be a Christian!

Gone is martyrdom for the faith. Gone is the open animosity between Protestant and Catholic! Gone are the days of politicians using the Church for personal gain. Gone is the Church insinuating itself into social and economic systems. Gone is belief that the Church was always right. Gone is the time when certain questions were taboo. Gone is the unquestioning assumption of a white male perspective. Gone is the ability of a church to hide scandal.

Oh yes, we can give examples of religious wrong-doing or abuse: Archbishop Romero or the ill-gotten gains of a church leader or congregations quelling scandals. May such examples be ever held before our eyes! Open honesty is the basis for the right relations God seeks.

Without any doubt, humanity will continue to uncover the not so nice aspects of itself within judicial, religious, academic, political, medical and economic systems. Let us hope so!

However, now is a great time to be Christian. Ecumenism is a fact in our lives. Interfaith is working well across our land. We know disease is not a punishment from God. We are free to explore “progressive” and “evolutionary” Christianity –or not. Denominations take seriously Mother Earth’s cry by adopting the Season of Creation/ Creation Time in the Season of Pentecost. Biblical scholars are now more honest about their biases.

In our denomination good things are happening: the Sacraments-Elder workbook has sold out! Worship Matters continues to gather people to learn about Christian music, sermons and liturgical arts. We strive to think, worship, speak and pray interculturally. We are exploring a primacy of the Font, instead of Table and Pulpit. Our worship resource, *Gathering*, sells in 5 countries and is expanding to a 4th issue each year. The Ladies Organization is experiencing renewal. We are asking great questions about spirituality and worship. Our church uses electronic media to bring resources, like this newsletter, to more congregations. Biblical drumming is returning to our churches. Hymn writing has burst its seams -globally. Our musicians are finding each other through Music United. Life is good!

(submitted by Erik Matheson, National Church Office, United Church)

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