

“Mother’s Ways of Knowing”

Easter 5, 1 Peter 2:2-10, May 9, 2021; 9:00 & 10:00 am
Congregational UCC, Buena Vista, CO
Rev. Rebecca K. Poos

1 Peter 2:2-10

Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation— if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God’s sight, and like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in scripture:

“See, I am laying in Zion a stone,
a cornerstone chosen and precious;
and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”

To you then who believe, he is precious; but for those who do not believe,

“The stone that the builders rejected
has become the very head of the corner”, and

“A stone that makes them stumble,
and a rock that makes them fall.”

They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation,
God’s own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty
acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous
light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people;

once you had not received mercy,
but now you have received mercy.

WHAT WOULD MOM SAY?

I’ve been talking with my friends, recently, about how *relieved* we are that our mothers didn’t have to experience this COVID pandemic.

My mom would have been very confused by it; felt someone was “ganging up on her” by making her stay in her room and not be able to cruise the halls with her walker. Probably think it was some kind of conspiracy theory, meant to cramp her style!

I asked a few friends, with mothers living or passed:

What would OUR mothers say to us in this time? This unprecedented time that we think is so unusual, but maybe they lived through times not that different.

One said, “My mother *always* said:
“*Things* work out best for the those that make the best of things.”
This will pass and we will get through it.

But, why do people have to wear masks? Why can they only come to the window? Why doesn’t my family come visit me?

Karla -- What would Mom think? She was born in 1925 so grew up in the Depression, then rationing of WWII.

She would be so proud she taught us all to sew (masks) and to cook and bake from scratch. She would be amused by toilet paper shortage. She would be terribly worried about the health of her extended family and friends.

It would be difficult for her to not be able to share her cooking and baking with others. She always told us stories about being so poor, not wasting anything. I find I’m a great resourceful person these days!

Her big statement about growing up poor, from her mother: "I don't care how poor you are, you can always be clean." If you relate that to today's world: "It makes no difference to your circumstances (unemployed, overworked, working or learning from home), you can always be clean.

Mom was really smart. And of course, "Quit being ugly. If you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all." She would be horrified by all of the negativity.

VARDA YORAN:

Varda Yoran is a "mother of our culture" you might say. She is very much still alive, and isn't about to slow down! She has lived through a lot in her 90 years and accomplished far more than most of us can imagine. She's an author, an artist, a grandmother, a life-explorer and commenter on current events.

She was recently interviewed about the pandemic, because she was *not impressed* with the way some are hinting that those over a certain age are not as important to save!

Her mother's message to us in these COVID times? EVERY soul of every age is to be highly valued—no matter what!

"What I've seen so far is that the crisis has brought out the best in good people and the worst in bad people. Some people may suggest that if I were to die of the coronavirus, I at least "have lived a full life." And yes, I have lived a full life. But, **I'm not disposable**, and I'm saddened that there are people who think age dictates whether a human life is worth saving.

Our lives, our dreams, our productivity don't end when we turn 65, an age that society decided was "old enough." Senior citizens can be productive and contribute to the world, bringing to it their added dimension of age and experience. I think **no** limit should be set on when a person's life is no longer valuable.

I'm 90 and I'm waiting for the quarantine to end. As long as I'm still creative and surrounded by the love of family and friends, as long as I still enjoy life, **nobody** has the right to write me off!"

JEAN BRODY:

My mother-in-law, Jean Brody, like Varda Yoran, is not to be cowed either! By age, or opinion, or "dismissal!" She is being quite a trooper and writing some of her best insights and depth ever. But she is keenly aware of the precipice she comes close to every day, as someone with compromised lungs, heart and stamina.

Our first thought when the virus hit was, "Oh my gosh. I hope this isn't what takes Mom." That was an unbearable thought. Even though she's brushed with death countless times over the years.

Somehow, this pivotal time in the history of the planet felt like a time when she is NEEDED. She was made for "such a time as this."

And she is rising to the occasion. And we are seeking to be the wind beneath the wings by spreading her wisdom on the airstream, broadening the reach of her impact—before her body finally decides to breathe its last—hopefully from some "old, old, lady malady" well into her 90's and NOT from Coronavirus.

Her #1 message to us for these times is: live in the moment, savor *every* moment, and every memory, and never take one precious moment for granted!

WHAT WOULD MOTHER EARTH SAY TO US?

On this day of celebrating Mothers—here and in the great beyond—and their wisdom to share with us, we look out to the greater beyond and the Mother Spirit that holds us all in her arms: Mother Earth.

God, our Creator is both mother and father and more, and on Mother's Day we honor and celebrate our Mothering God in all her many expressions.

What would Mother Earth say to us right now?
What is the message she's calling out in these times?

Rev. Kate Mathews, has suggested a different name for this time, which I rather like: A time of "enclosure."

I wonder if Mother Earth wouldn't like us to consider that notion as well. A time for us—in our lives and throughout the planet—to “stop, take stock, and begin afresh, in our shared life so that those "things" we are about actually **nourish** rather than consume us.”

She tells of years ago when her church, "took a nap" in January; they only had gatherings for prayer, learning, and worship. No meetings!

I've heard of churches taking a “sabbatical” for a season like this many times, and have thought it would be a healthy thing to do—especially when burn-out creeps in and folks are just tired and uninspired. Lay leadership needs an occasional sabbatical, just like a pastor does.

Well, coronavirus season has given us that, in a sense! And we didn't even have to plan for it or get approval!

Mathews suggests that we take it beyond our own lives and communities, and consider how Mother Earth might be asking us to stop, take stock and begin fresh.

“In the same way, many people are taking this time to consider ways we might make major changes, not small ones, in the way we live, both individually and communally. When we see that the air over New York and China is clearer, the waters in Italy are cleaner, the animals are ambling through formerly congested areas...don't we feel a pang of both guilt and longing for the world to be more at rest, for the earth to be less taxed, by the way we humans live? If we followed the example of our ancestors in faith, sharing more and using less, significantly so, how might this terrible time yield unexpected wisdom and blessing?”

Last week we learned how the Early Church called itself “The Called-Out Ones.” Called out of everyday life, business and busyness –to “be the Church.” Perhaps, in this time of Enclosure, our Mother Creator God, Maker of us all, is calling us out to love and care for and tend and nurture the Earth in ways we haven't done as deeply and thoroughly before.

Honor your father and your (Earth) **mother**, so that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your **God** is giving you. Exodus reminds us.

I Peter 2:2-10 encourages us to “start over.”

Be like newborn infants—take a new approach to life, living gently on the earth; learning from this pandemic to walk softly in all ways; care for one another and our spiritual and physical home more deeply.

It's time to start over.

Creation needed a RESET. A do over.

We are at a crucial moment in the life of the planet and the life of the world that we live in. Act now to turn the tide, or it will be too late. Could that be what Mother Earth is saying to us today?

WHAT WILL WE MAKE OF THIS LIFE?

We are all at once both a composition and a composer. We have the ability not only to compose the future of our own lives, but to help composer the future of everyone around us and the communities in which we live. (Maya Angelou)

Message from the Council of 13 Indigenous Grandmothers:

‘As you move through these changing times... be easy on yourself and be easy on one another. You are at the beginning of something new. You are learning a new way of being. You will find that you are working less in the yang modes that you are used to.

You will stop working so hard at getting from point A to point B the way you have in the past, but instead, you will spend more time experiencing yourself in the whole, and your place in it.

Instead of traveling to a goal out there, you will voyage deeper into yourself. **Your mother’s grandmother knew how to do this.** Your ancestors from long ago knew how to do this. They knew the power of the feminine principle... and because **you carry their DNA in your body, this wisdom and this way of being is within you.**

Call on it. Call it up. Invite your ancestors in. As the yang based habits and the decaying institutions on our planet begin to crumble, look up. A breeze is stirring. Feel the sun on your wings.’

Scripture:

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PRAYER

“No one can possess an afternoon of rain beating against the window, or the serenity of a sleeping child, or the magical moment when the waves break on the rocks. No one can possess the beautiful things of this Earth, but we can know them and love them. It is through such moments that God reveals himself to mankind.”

— Paulo Coelho, *Brida* (1990)

Happy Mother’s Day. Amen.