

The Lakeside



Message in a bottle

Verse of the day for Monday August 5, 2024 - Ecclesiastes 3: 1

There is an appointed time for everything. And there is a time for every event under heaven—

Read Ecclesiastes 3 for meditation and inspiration.



Dear Lakesiders and Friends,

My dear friend Rev. Dr. Bob Pitman used to say that his birthday comes every year no matter what because you just can't stop the calendar BUT what matters is what you do for the Lord each day that is on that calendar's page. This makes me think of a story I heard that goes like this.

A child and his father were visiting an elderly neighbor. They were raking the neighbor's leaves, organizing the neighbor's garage, putting the trash out, and performing other small jobs around the neighbor's house. The child had not really seen the elderly neighbor up close, but on this day the child was going to meet the neighbor up close for the first time. When the child met the neighbor up close he asked the neighbor how old he was. Undeterred by the bold question, the elderly neighbor told the child he was 92 years old. The child had a look of unbelief and asked the neighbor, "Did you start at the number one?"

Living with a teacher it is apparent to me that most educators live by a different calendar. Whether they are elementary school teachers or university professors, the rhythm of the calendar, and time keeping itself, are functions of the school year. The new year is not January, but August. Years are not measured in 365 days or 52-week increments, but rather, an educator's year follows a minimum of 180 days or 16-week semesters. In other words, for many in education, they begin to count down the days to vacation or the end of the school year by a calendar different than that of other people.

The challenge for those of us at Lakeside Presbyterian Church, living with teachers or school age children, is that we live by multiple calendars. We have our school calendar with holidays, teacher work days, fall, winter and spring breaks and summer vacation and then our Western calendar with government approved

holidays when banks are closed and mail not delivered and also the Church inspired calendar. At times, it can be a clash of time and culture when spring break, Easter break, Christmas holiday and standardized tests or midterms all collide. Yet, the idea that everything has its place helps to govern our lives. The rhythm of the Christian/Church calendar grounds us in the cycle of religious memory and faith. The Western calendar tells us where we spend our time while working or with family. And the school calendar tells us how we share our ministry with others learning and growing together.

While summer begins to wane and fade into fall, life's tempo picks up and we say often, "where did the summer go?" But perhaps most of all, we remain in Eastertide, living in the light of the resurrection. No matter what time you keep or what calendar you live by, know that the rhythms by which we live define who we are and to what we give our life. In this life, our time on this earth is limited, so make sure that you define the calendar, and that the calendar does not define you.

With gratitude for the time we have together,



Roger

