

“Change”

Pastor Terry Hanna

“O sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth.” Psalm 96: 1

I seem to have a creation theme going on these days. In the past few months I have written about a desert journey, a solar eclipse, and rocks. This month all I can think about is trees! And as I look at the trees changing color, all I can think about is change! It all started with “the tree” in front of our church that had to be cut down.

I know that big old tree was leaning. We all lean over with age. But its roots had held firm for years and probably held the corner of our education building up until we could put in a retaining wall by the creek. And I know that old tree was slowly dying, from the brown bottom branches to the green tip of its top. We are all slowly dying and would like to grow old with dignity. That tree had been treated for bugs twice, but finally lost the battle. The sad thing is that so many people noticed it and complained about it when it was alive, but barely noticed it when it was gone. Are we forgotten so quickly- here today and gone tomorrow?

Now you might think that I am getting a little worked up over a tree, but when it was finally cut down, I looked at the rings in its remaining trunk and I realized that this tree had been here for over 75 years! It had 75 years of its full green branches providing shade over the children's playground. It had 75 years of watching the comings and goings of this church and this town. So in memorial we have taken some of the remaining wood from the tree to fashion crosses to give to the people of this church in memory of its life. As we remember the tree, we will remember all the people who have walked under its branches, who have come and gone over the many years of this church's life, and we will be grateful!

A wise man once said, “The only way to make sense of change is to plunge into it, move with it, and join the dance.” (Alan Watts) I know that as I get older and my body leans and my skin becomes crusty with age, it is harder for me to change. But as I say, “Good-bye” to that old tree, I will accept the changes that I see around me, be grateful for what has been, and be ready and willing to join the dance.

Pastor Terry