

"It may be hard for an egg to turn into a bird: it would be a jolly sight harder for it to learn to fly while remaining an egg. We are like eggs at present. And you cannot go on indefinitely being just an ordinary, decent egg. We must be hatched or go bad."

– C.S. Lewis, writer (*Change Happens*. by Kathryn & Ross Petras, pg 110.)

Our mission center is having pangs of change. In these moments pain and hope live side by side, and our faith can seem challenged when experiencing this contrast. "What will happen?" "How might a change in this area affect what is important to me?" "Is this occurrence a 'sign' or 'omen?'" And, "Is there responsibility to be taken?" Sometimes change takes us by surprise – especially if we have not been paying attention, or were ignoring the situation. It doesn't always bring out the best in us. Yet, change is often the result of an opportunity requiring us to leave our comfort zones.

We experience such opportunities throughout our lives. We get new jobs, move, go through difficult times, over-commit then pay the price, under-commit or are restless, explore roles we aren't sure we'll be good at, become limited by our physical capacity or the capacity of loved ones, wait for others to step forward first, and question stirrings within ourselves. In other words, we are human. We are also divinely loved. Even during the messy business of eggs-becoming-birds, such as C.S. Lewis described, we are loved and called to grow into our still-imperfect potential.

This fall we prepare for congregation and mission center business meetings. We will struggle with what it means to be the church, and question where our support matters most. Changes in leadership will happen. Difficult discussions will be had. Decisions will be made that won't be unanimous. We might say "yes," "no," or "possibly" when we would previously have said nothing. We may even challenge and revision structures or ideas that no longer work. There will be hope and there might be fear. Yet we will also listen deeply to each other, perhaps hearing for the first time.

I hope we will engage out of love, passion, acceptance that all decisions lead to change (whether we want them to or not), and a companionship with God as Emmanuel – *God with us*. As congregations and as a mission center, I find no reason we should fear becoming the flying birds God envisions. Instead, I see cause to be grateful and expectant! God is at work in our midst. Let us nurture what is unfolding and offer our support.

Yours,
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