

February 2018 Article – Diana Hansen

Creating Space

Now the Lord said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you.”

Genesis 12:1

The church staff recently shared in an online worship service with participants at the Temple and in the global field. As part of the service, we were invited to share our hopes for the coming year – for the world, the church, and our work. My personal hope for the church in 2018 came easily. It is what I perceive the Spirit asking of me as a member of Community of Christ, and faithful disciple of Christ.

In 2018, I hope that we the church, with prophetic intent and purpose, create space for what is yet to be.

As many of you know, my husband and I recently moved from Tucson to Gilbert. We moved ourselves with a lot of planning, blood, sweat, and several tears. (The blood was Dick’s.) Although we physically moved mid-October, our moving preparations began last Spring. We didn’t know where we were going to live exactly, what the floorplan would be like (except smaller), or when it would happen. What we DID have is an idea, desire, and sense that it was time to begin the process.

Downsizing was painful. At times it felt ruthless. It was also illuminating and humbling. So many things we’d collected and not used, or kept simply because they could collect dust without notice. The waste of what could have been shared long ago was embarrassing to acknowledge. Other things we liked and used yet knew would not fit in a smaller home. They’d served their purpose.

Then there were the items kept because of the memories they elicited, the hope they offered, or they were beloved favorites. While many weren't going to work in our new space or new life, I insisted on taking most of them anyway. Once in our new home we began unpacking and decorating, and I tried to find my beloved items a place they fit. I grieved to see them crammed in a closet or buried in a corner of the garage. That they did not work was undeniable. Over time, the once "can-not-live-without" items became "treasures-for-Goodwill-shoppers."

What changed? How did I go from hanging on to things in grief, to fondly reminiscing in gratitude?! Quite simply, I fell in love. I fell in love with our new home – the opportunities it offered, the new rhythms of life it enabled. Even when I couldn't remember which drawer I placed the silverware in, or kept finding socks where I thought PJ's would be...I was learning to love what was different.

There is much for you and I to love regarding the church's future. There is much for us and others to love! Even if that future is more of an inkling than an idea, it is time to plan, prepare, and step into that unknown. We will need to "downsize" things that are not useful, even if a beloved favorite. As this happens, the Spirit will fill that space and unfold, expanding to carry us into the future that waits. What was grieved while letting go will help shape, invite, and receive God's generous vision of Shalom.

Let's move forward in hope. Let's make space to love this new, future "home" together!

Yours,
Diana