

Dwelling in the Word – March 3, 2023

Yellowstone Presbytery

Rev. Mary G. Reynolds

Doing a New Thing – Isaiah 43: 18-21

¹⁸ Don't remember the prior things;
don't ponder ancient history.

¹⁹ Look! I'm doing a new thing;
now it sprouts up; don't you recognize it?

I'm making a way in the desert,
paths^[e] in the wilderness.

²⁰ The beasts of the field,
the jackals and ostriches, will honor me,
because I have put water in the desert
and streams in the wilderness
to give water to my people,
my chosen ones,

²¹ this people whom I formed for myself,
who will recount my praise.

While the scripture is read, slowly, three times, begin to doodle on the picture of the church in front of you. Fill in the spaces with bright color or shapes...don't be afraid to reimagine what elements of a church building can be. Perhaps

the dirt path in the front is actually a river of water flowing out of the church's doors...maybe the tree's leaves are shaped like stars or hearts. Or doodle something that reminds you of churches you've been to or worked at. What features did that church have? If you really cannot doodle, you can also write in the open space words that strike you, prayers that come to mind, your hopes and dreams for the church, your good memories from church. Fill the church with the words that are on your heart.

Don't hold back or second-guess yourself, these need not be shared.

Would you classify yourself as someone who likes change, who thrives in change – or do you resist it? What do you wish God would change about the church? What do you wish would stay the same?

In Isaiah 43, God calls the people his witnesses. What had the people of Israel witnessed? What have you witnessed in your lifetime, or personally? What are your stories about God?

Is dwelling in the past different from drawing on the past for the strength to face the future? How so?

