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# The Year Topsy-Turvy Became Normal

Aug 3, 2020 | Arkansas United Methodist



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A lot of things have changed in the last five months. Not just a little, but a lot. I don't think it's an overreach to say 2020 is the year topsy-turvy became normal!

Think of all that has changed the last five months. COVID-19 has dramatically altered our daily rhythm of living. A long-standing cry for racial justice has reached the tipping point so that our nation is involved in serious – and often painful – conversations about how to

dismantle racism and build reconciliation. Many of you have been financially devastated, and literally are struggling day-to-day just to survive. If you are a parent, you are faced with the hard decision about sending your children to school. Our nation remains deeply polarized and it threatens to rend us apart. And to top it all off, your church that has been foundational in your life may still be meeting virtually, and you are uncertain when you will be able to gather again to sing hymns of praise, share Holy Communion, and enjoy in-person fellowship with people who are such an important part of your life. It's been so long, you actually may be looking forward to the resumption of potlucks!

When everything seems like it has changed, it is important to remember that the important things in life have not changed. In fact, I am convinced they are more important than ever.

Think of all that is most important and will never change. God still is God, Jesus still is Lord and the Holy Spirit still is at work. You still need to have a personal relationship with Jesus as Lord and Savior that so transforms you from the inside-out you literally are born again. God still requires you 'to act justly, and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.' The joy of the Lord still rings out more loudly than all the bad news of the world. You still can speak, act and live with integrity. There still is nothing in all creation that can separate you from God's love in Jesus Christ. God still sends people who are angels to you and God still sends you to be an angel to others. The Holy Spirit still will give you gifts to build up the Body of Christ and serve a broken world. You still can make a difference in someone's life every single day.

When you get to be my age, you've had the opportunity to learn a lot of lessons. Many of them multiple times. There is one in particular that I have discovered is essential for thriving in a topsy-turvy world. It's that I must hold onto those things in life that are most important, and carry them into a world that is constantly changing so I can adapt to the new realities I face without losing my soul. Sure, I wish life would change. Especially those things that are most painful and disruptive. But I can't change the way things are. I can choose, however, to adapt and do things differently while still believing, living and proclaiming those things that are most important.

Yes, a lot has changed in the last five months. Yet because God is still God, Jesus is still Lord and the Holy Spirit is still at work, I can live in the love of the Lord, experience joy and look forward to the future with hope in a topsy-turvy world. And so can you!

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