

“Always We Begin Again”

By Susan Rice

Moving from Liverpool, UK, back to the states and entering a new role I realize once again that any kind of transition can be uncomfortable. Even with a hopeful future, there is also grief over relationships that are changing, fear of the unknown, and a general sense of not being fully at home. During my own transition, the words “Always, we begin again” remind me that this is a journey of being with God and with others in community. Each morning there is mercy, each night there is rest and always, a new beginning. The words offer a type of welcome- a welcome to hopefulness, a welcome to both grieve the community that I left and to wait patiently until community is formed here. There is welcome to the process versus an impatience to reach a destination. The welcome allows me freedom to take each day as it comes and to be hospitable to the emotions and situation of the day. Beginning doesn't always mean bright and shiny; it can also mean difficult steps of vulnerability. I saw this reflected in the lives of the refugees we worked with in the UK. Each day held challenges to their beginning in a new culture and country. This type of beginning again takes a lot of courage- especially when days are filled with uncertainty. I wonder what the words “always, we begin again” offer to you in your current situation or stage of life?

Preparing for the season of Advent, I wonder as well how Jesus experienced His transition to an earthly body - arriving in a new place, helpless, depending on others for food and care. It does not sound very comfortable! Yet I imagine He also experienced the welcoming presence of Mary and Joseph. Again, the themes of discomfort, welcome, and community. These will be themes we reflect upon during our December Desert Day. May you know the deep and abiding love that welcomes even discomfort and grief, may you find hope in the invitation to begin again, and may you know the joy of being fully seen, known, and loved in safe community.

(Thanks to Susan for this article and for her friendship and support of The Anchorage over many years. In June she completed her 3-year term as a Servant Leader (Board of Directors) even as they were in Liverpool! Grateful for Zoom meetings. She enjoys offering transformational coaching, spiritual direction and creating space for others to experience the love of God. She also loves being in nature, exploring new places and ideas, and listening with others as they discover transformational unfolding of their gifting. She and her husband, David, have served in cross cultural missions for 36 years, and offer member care for missionaries.)

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