

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

LIVING • LOVING • LEARNING

In the early 1970s, I was introduced to the writings of Victor Turner. Turner specialized in symbolism and religious anthropology. Drawing and expanding upon the earlier work of Arnold Van Gennep, Turner emphasized the concept of “liminality” which is the “betwixt and between” state of shifting into a major change in our “worldview”. Society, was, according to Turner, emerging from the “modern” worldview into a yet undefined, but nevertheless unfolding, model of social and religious change. The old values and ways of looking at the world were disappearing, but the new ways had not yet emerged. Because of this lack of clear definition, the current “age” has simply been labelled “post-modern”. The new age is still unfolding and we simply do not have an adequate label to describe it. We are “betwixt and between” the old and the new.

This edition of the Herald reflects some of this reality. Apostle Ron Harmon urges us to understand that “we bring our own story with us”. Each of us peers through our own “interpretive lens” to create our own reality, including the way we view the life and ministry of Jesus. Katie Harmon-McLaughlin expands upon this idea and suggests that we each “ask for the Spirit to reveal to us the lenses through which you see and interpret events in your life, faith and world.”

From hard work and enthusiastic support a new vision begins to take form at Tiona. In this edition we showcase some of the changes already begun that point to a bright future for Tiona as a place in which community can be nurtured. “We need your help to continue to make our collective dream a reality.”

Jim Hannah reports on a John Dear conference which emphasized non-violence and “transforming the world into a culture of justice and peace”. Food for thought in these emerging global times.



Jan Kraybill writes about the importance and intersection of music and ministry in her life, whilst Larry McGuire also draws from his own life-story to present the visual image of an old bent tree to symbolise the challenges that confront the church in this hidden, still unfolding future.

“Kids’ Corner” this month also touches on growth and development in the lives of our young ones. There is a need to develop, more than ever, ways of helping them grow confidence, a sense of spirituality and creative ways

to deal with problem-solving and healthy relationships in these uncertain times.

It seems apparent, that whether we like it or not, we are entering a new age. Developments in technology, especially in communication – technology, have profoundly affected our way of life in recent times. What is radically different in our current situation is that the rate of change is still accelerating and will be further impacted by the robotic developments that are becoming a way of life. The old structures (including the structures of “traditional church”) are being viewed as inadequate for the age in which we are living. Recent global challenges suggest that we need to develop global approaches to living in our emerging global world. Religion is not exempted from these challenges and in my personal opinion is urgently in need of developing models of cooperation and mutual support in these troubled times.

Liminal periods in history inevitably bring with them new ideas and new ways of living and learning. They also typically include strong reactions, both for and against the changing world view. I can do no better than to conclude with the words of Apostle Ron Harmon: “The inconvenient truth is that the words of Jesus are disruptive in each generation and call us to become a new generation.”

Harry Fielding

Editorial Team Member