



## Minding the Gap - January 2016

A Faith and Work Publication

Welcome to Minding the Gap, a monthly thought about faith in the workplace!

### "Behold All Things Have Become New"

For many of us, January is the time for setting goals and making resolutions about the coming year - "a lot of things are going to be different (new) this year!" This becomes the 'battle cry' of every person: young-old, wealthy-poor, Russian-French, black-white. And it's a good thing.

Moving to the realm of the Spirit, the above phrase is part of one of my most treasured Scripture verses. The whole verse reads "*So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new.*" (II Cor. 5:17). It's treasured for me because it describes my experience when I came to realize that having the acts and teachings of Jesus as the 'center point' for life needed to be my top priority. This humbling and scary realization was accompanied by a heartwarming sense of *newness* and *energy* toward life - ebbing and flowing over the 55 years since that time. It's an on-going New Year!

Beyond my experience, this verse also points to a tenet of our faith present since the life of Christ. It is the central **principle of incarnation** (often described as the embodiment of God into creation). With the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus, our entire understanding of a relationship with the Creator was (and is) reversed. **Instead** of us going to God, God comes to us. **Instead** of us working to be worthy in the 'eyes of God', God is saying, "You are so valuable to Me that I want to come and live with you." **Instead** of building temples and worship centers to help us contain God to certain times and places, God is longing just to be with us in our daily lives. Yes, for the rest of time and beyond

"everything (our understanding of God's nature and all of life) has become new". As the author, Clarence Campbell, wrote: "*God doesn't just come to pay a brief visit; rather God comes and pitches his tent in our front yard.*"

Recently I read Richard Rohr's meditation on the significance of God's incarnation through Christ. He reflects: "*The belief that God is "out there" is the basic dualism that is tearing us all apart ....This loss is foundational as to why we live such distraught and divided lives. Jesus came precisely to put it all together for us and in us. He was saying, in effect, "To be human is good! The material and the physical can be trusted and enjoyed. This world is the hiding place of God and the revelation of God!"*"

Let us take this mind set with us as we head to our places of work and as we do, we will be a 'counter weight' to the often prevalent default mode of **power, possessions and pride** which only leads to distrust, control, isolation, etc. Perhaps, for us in this New Year, the "**behold all things have become new**" in this New Year for us is to view and relate to our working colleagues in a manner which as Jesus may have said, "To be human is good!"

Blessings to you in this New Year!

- Jim Grubs

Incarnation Lutheran Church, 4880 Hodgson Road, Shoreview, MN 55126