

Robert Malm
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Making All Things New

We have a wonderful theme for our Grace Episcopal School Sunday this year. Almost 1200 schools have celebrated this theme as we affirm the important ministry our Church has with education. Every school year is a new beginning. Every day there are new learnings. We watch our children grow into this newness each year, each day.

Our mission as a school and as a parish is to help our children grow into a love of learning, a love of new discoveries, new truths, new possibilities. At Grace Episcopal School we are not just preparing our students for middle school, and, then, high school and college. We are preparing them for life – a life filled with a love for learning.

And it is our mission to also help our students to know God's love, God's promise, God's hope. In chapel, in religion class, in our school community life, our students come to understand the "summary of the law"; to love God with all our heart, all our soul, all our mind. And to love our neighbor as ourselves.

Of course this theme "Behold, I will do something new" is a quote from the Book of Revelation. It is God speaking. God is giving hope for this life and the life to come. God makes all things new, from birth through childhood, through our years as adults and, even, when our physical life is over. God makes everything new.

Revelation was written to a people undergoing persecution and oppression. It was easy for them to lose hope. John's vision inspired them to persevere, to know God would deliver them in this life and in the life to come.

Jesus had this sense that God was making everything new. His teaching, his work, his miracles showed people a new way to understand God's love, God's presence in the world. God's Kingdom was breaking in through the power of Jesus' love.

Matthew is the Gospel writer who most appreciated this sense of newness. He wrote to those formed in the Jewish tradition to help them to understand that Jesus was the new fulfillment of the law and prophets. As God's son, Jesus brought new life to those who had given up on life.

If there is one lesson I hope our students take away from their time here it would be simply God's love in Jesus can make our lives new every day. Love has this transforming power. We believe God is love. This love is active each and every day.

One of my favorite hymn writers is John Keble. He was a teacher, a professor of English and Poetry at Oxford during the 19th century. He became a priest and served in the same parish for over 30 years. When I think of how God works in our lives each day in some new way I think of one of Keble's hymns, "New Every Morning."

New every morning is the love
Our wakening and uprising prove;
Through sleep and darkness safely brought,
Restored to life and power and thought.

New mercies, each returning day,
Around us hover while we pray;
New perils past, new sins forgiven,
New thoughts of God, new hopes of heaven.

Hymn #10, John Keble 1822

Revelation 21:1-7
Matthew 13:44-52