

A Perspective of Faith
August 20, 2008

In our staff meeting, I shared the following reading. It comes from a Jesuit Priest named Luis Espinal, who was assassinated on March 22, 1980 in La Paz, Bolivia, by paramilitary forces. He wrote this meditation shortly before his death. He wrote it in a time of struggle in his country, when people were suffering greatly and the church was experiencing turmoil.

"There are Christians who have hysterical reactions, as if the world would have slipped out of God's hands. They act violently as if they were risking everything.

"But we believe in history; the world is not a roll of the dice toward chaos. A new world has begun to happen since Christ has risen. . .

"Jesus Christ, we rejoice in your definitive triumph . . .
With our bodies still in the breach
And our souls still in tension,
We will cry out our first "Hurrah!"
Till eternity unfolds itself.

"Your sorrow now has passed.
Your enemies have failed.
You are a definitive smile for humankind.

"What does it matter now that we wait for You?
We will accept the struggle, and the death;
Because You, our love, will not die!

"We march behind You, on the road to the future. You are with us and You are our immortality!

"So, take away the sadness from our faces. We are not a game of chance . . . You have the last word!

"Beyond the crushing of our bones, now has begun the eternal "alleluia!"
From the thousand opening of our wounded bodies and souls there arises now a triumphal song!

"So teach us to give voice to Your new life throughout all the world.

"Because You dry the tears from the eyes of the oppressed forever . . .
And death will disappear."

This writing, for me, witnesses to hope in the midst of difficulty. It witnesses to the gift of turning to God in the midst of disappointment. It witnesses to understanding that our present challenges are not the be all and end all of what defines us. But it witnesses to our faith perspective of seeing beyond the present challenges to a God who loves us, who will not abandon us.

The future for us may be uncertain. The present may be filled with challenges. The past may offer us pain, abandonment and disappointment.

But God is in this moment, to give us courage, to help us put one foot in front of another, to lift our eyes to a new future.

May God teach us *"to give voice to Your new life throughout all the world."*

In the hope Jesus offers us,
Rev. Scott Carlson

The Mission of Sun Prairie United Methodist Church is to invite and welcome people to be committed and compassionate followers of Jesus Christ through worship, through spiritual growth, through fellowship and through service to others.