

Ocean Shores United Methodist Church

March 29, 2020

The Rev. Ronald R. P. Myers

A Word for the Life of Jerry Daken

The grace and peace of Christ be with you! My brothers and sisters in Christ,

It is with deep sadness that I share with you the notification of the passing of our brother in Christ, Jerry Daken. Our ability to celebrate Jerry's life as we would usually do will be delayed as a result of the "Sheltered in Place Order" for the Coronavirus, but I did want to offer a comforting word.

This morning as I remember Jerry and the last time that I saw him at PAWS, I am drawn to the promise in Psalm 30. The writer reminds us about the eternal character and love of God with these words:

*¹¹ You have turned my mourning into dancing;
you have taken off my sackcloth
and clothed me with joy,*

*12 so that my soul^[a] may praise you and not be silent.
O Lord my God, I will give thanks to you forever*

Jerry's life was never meant to be measured in the years that were spent on earth but in the quality of those years that were invested in kindness, love and care. Jerry was actively involved in the Ocean Shores community through his volunteer work at the Food Bank and PAWS. I am sure that there are other ways that his life impacted this community, and I encourage you to share those stories.

Each one of you holds an image, a story, a memory of Jerry, right in the center of your heart, right now. On this Sunday morning, I charge you to let the joy of that image rush in and fill the dark spaces that seek to invade your heart during this time of loss.

The images that you hold of Jerry in your hearts will continue to pierce the darkness of any space by infusing beauty into those memories that you cling now in your loss.

While there is sadness in grieving, it also includes a promise of joy in trusting God with the future. We have hope in God alone, and God is the creator of life who helps us to recreate joy in the midst of grief.

*We sorrow not as others do, Whose hopes fade like the flowers;
There is a hope that's born of God, And such a hope is ours.*

I believe that there is a divine light that pierces through any clouds of darkness that encompasses you as you grieve Jerry's loss. There is a depth of joy that invites you to inhale the reality of this moment and to exhale with gratitude the divine breath that is the promise of Jerry's resurrected life in God.

My words are truly inadequate to express the power of a simple yet quiet witness, but I am simply left in "awe" of the extraordinary living that can emerge from a humble, joy-filled and well-loved life. Jerry remains in each one of us, and he now rests in the "Great Mystery of Love" that know no ending.

I can say with great confidence, "Well done good and faithful Servant of God." "You have now entered in the Eternal Mystery of Love."

On this day join your broken hearts together in singing that ever faint "Hallelujah" for we must trust that there is nothing in life that will ever separate you from that love that we experienced in loving through the life of Jerry Dakins. God will help us remember—put back together that which is

broken—for though Jerry is gone from our sight, we can clearly see him in those images that we recreate that are a recollection of his living and loving.

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Pastor Ron Myers