

A MOMENT TO ENJOY THE VIEW FROM THE BUNNY TRAIL

It was St Patrick's Day this past Sunday. I don't know what it was doing right in the middle of Lent, the season of assumed sobriety. This St Patrick's Sunday my eye scans ahead on the calendar, sort of like you do when reading your email with an eye on the ones still ahead.

I check the Sundays. It's an old clergy habit I've not overcome. Most clergy have this Sunday to Sunday screwy way of keeping time. This Sunday to Sunday thing can get scary as it was for me on St Patrick's Day looking at my calendar. Yikes! Next Sunday is Palm Sunday...and **the NEXT SUNDAY IS EASTER!**

I've been trying to hippity hop along toward Easter at a measured pace and all the time Easter has been coming at me like a cannon ball. Easter's on its way, bringing no telling what. I have tried to make note of all the events that appear along my path. Many of my readers have been doing the same thing as a kind of preparation for Easter. As I read my pages I see that I have noted more valleys and dark days than view points and sunshine.

The Easter path that Jesus took from Capernaum to Jerusalem is not like the river path Jean and I walk almost every morning. Ours goes along the Willamette River and is virtually level. The one Jesus took goes from the lake called Galilee along the Jordan River for many miles to Jericho, then turns up to Jerusalem. I mean UP. From 1000 feet below sea level to 2500 feet above. A hot, dry, rocky trail most of the time. It's hard to hippity hop when you must gain 3500 feet in elevation. According to Mark's version of the story Jesus says "We're going up to Jerusalem..." at least twice. In Matthew he repeats it three times. Jerusalem is "up."

He was headed for trouble and he had met every manner of sickness and dying and trouble along the way. Dark valleys with wild animals, especially bears and sometimes robbers. Probably panhandlers too, like those we see along our river walk sometimes.

There are mountains and long vistas along the way toward Jerusalem. Sunrises and sunsets, laughter and bread and wine. Happy news of people walking and seeing and being well again. There was a wedding somewhere, maybe, and a party or two.

How do I know? I think of good moments along my own bunny trail. Like news that grandson, Andrew and Erin will be moving to Palo Alto because Erin won a rare dual residency in pediatrics and anesthesiology at the Stanford Medical School and Hospital. It's a big deal. It was her first choice and she was theirs. I gave a little hippity hop. Actually I gave a big hop and whoop!

We've also been anticipating news of the birth of our second great-grand daughter. It keeps us eager to get beyond the next hill and around the corner. Hippity, hippity hop, before Easter we think.

And spring flowers are blossoming. Even the deer have come back from wherever they have been for the last couple of months. They nibble the fresh grass that I can't mow close to the trees out back.

We hear of good things that add some hippity hop to friends lives, like trips, birthdays, completion of taxes, attending baseball games, being present in the birthing barn for the arrival of newborn kids, times by our window watching weather come across the hills and fields far in the distance, going out on a crisp clear night to search for the new moon and to give attention to the stars.

It is good to pause in the hurried, hippity hoppity hopping down the bunny trail to note moments of special and deep happiness. I don't like to go so fast that I miss good moments.

There will be a time to tackle the up-hill trails, a time to face whatever lies between where we are now and Easter.

"For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven;

A time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to harvest;

A time to kill, and I time to heal, a time to break down and a time to build up;

A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn and a time to dance..."

O yes, " *Here comes Peter Cottontail, hopping down the bunny trail,*

Look at him stop, and listen to him say: 'Try to do the things you should.'

Maybe if you're extra good, he'll roll lots of Easter eggs "

Who knows? Keep on hopping. A little faster now, Easter's on its way! Very, very soon!

—Art Morgan, March 18, 2013