

# “See, I am making all things new.”

Revelation 21:5 NRSV

The title for my brief article is taken from the second scripture reading assigned for the Fifth Sunday of Easter. I love the verb tense in this translation. It’s a vision of God’s work being ongoing and not yet fully completed. It’s not translated, “I made all things new,” but rather, “...I am making all things new.” The trajectory is clear—God is still working. God is still creating, still redeeming, and still blessing our world.



Contrast this with the theology of Deism which emphasizes that God set things into motion and more or less is on the sidelines watching us. It’s the metaphor of the master clockmaker who has made a magnificent clock, wound it up, and leaves it to tick on its own. God expects us to do all the work. I believe that we have profound work to do as we bear witness to God’s vision for love, forgiveness, and justice. But I also believe that we are promised to not be alone in our work for God’s righteous purposes. Simply stated, I am not a big fan of Deism!

Pastor Carey Nieuwhof ([careynieuwhof.com](http://careynieuwhof.com)) blogs about contemporary matters of Christian ministry. Recently, he posted an article about, “12 Disruptive Church Trends That Will Rule 2022 (And the Post-Pandemic World).” The first trend noted was, “The Demise of the Old Model of Church.” Nieuwhof further says, “What was is gone. What will be hasn’t yet emerged.”

These seemingly obvious observations could lead to much anxiety and depression. But, how about embracing a vision of God “doing a new thing?”

The first reading assigned for the Fifth Sunday of Easter tells of a vision in Acts, chapter 11. Peter has a vision of being asked to eat food that had been forbidden in his religious tradition. “Get up, Peter: kill and eat.” “What God has made clean, you must not call profane.”

I’m sure this radical change of dietary restrictions being lifted must have been hard for Peter to “stomach” (pun intended!).

But Peter adjusted and lived into the new reality and new way of being faithful. God was alongside Peter encouraging him. Like Peter, changes in the way of being church might initially cause our “stomachs to turn.”

Nieuwhof further writes that the key is to experiment, stay faithful to biblical principles, study your people, and study the culture. These are the key components of the Faithful Innovations process offered in our Northern Great Lakes Synod. I invite you to explore this training possibility for your congregation as our model of being church is being inevitably disrupted. Go to: [nglsynod.org/faithful-innovations](http://nglsynod.org/faithful-innovations).

Whether or not you formally engage in the Faithful Innovations trainings, I pray that God’s Spirit might encourage you to join in with the Lord who is making all things new.

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