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Reflection for April 15

By Barbara Certa-Werner

Let us thank our God, who causes hope to spring up from the ground.

Christ is risen, Christ is giving life eternal, life profound.

-Cristo Vive (Christ Is Risen) Hymn #313

Last week I went to the grocery store and as I drew near the front entrance, I saw a small crowd of people. I had several panicked thoughts at once: they are not social distancing!; what are they thinking?!; where are their masks?!; and how can I get as far away as possible?! And then, I took a deep breath.

I noticed that the “group of five” had bags and other belongings surrounding them. I realized that they were homeless and I knew that the homeless shelters were full and that there were not enough safe places for homeless to stay in Wisconsin and Minnesota. As I walked by, I greeted them and they warmly greeted me.

As I walked around the store, gathering the items I wanted, I thought about what the “group of five” needed: a safe place to stay, food to eat, and access to bathrooms/handwashing. While I could not provide those particular things, I knew that Christ was calling me to do what I could.

For the last couple of days, as I celebrated the Resurrection of Jesus and the new life, my mind kept going back to the “group of five” and how the homeless have always been an avenue for God to speak to me in a transformative way. And then, I realized that there are some significant questions that I need to wrestle with and I invite you to reflect and contemplate with me:

1. As a Christian living in this pandemic, what ways may I faithfully serve those most vulnerable and most in need?
2. As a resurrected people, where do I see God and how do I witness to God's amazing grace and power in this world?
3. As a United Methodist, how do I seek justice for those ignored, forgotten, stigmatized, or ____ (fill in the blank)?

My earnest prayer is that in all things may we seek God's transforming love and power. Amen.