

We are now in the season of *new*. New Year, new resolutions, new goals, new plans...new. New can be good — new friends, new jobs, new life. Sometimes, new can be overrated— new fads, new phones (your old one is perfectly fine). Nonetheless, here we find ourselves in a season of newness.

In the Old Testament, we read this in Isaiah: “I am the LORD, your Holy One, Israel’s Creator and King. I am the LORD, who opened a way through the waters, making a dry path through the sea. I called forth the mighty army of Egypt with all its chariots and horses. I drew them beneath the waves, and they drowned, their lives snuffed out like a smoldering candlewick.....But forget all that — it is nothing compared to what I am going to do. For I am about to do something new....” (Isaiah 43:15-19a).

I don’t have the space to get into precisely what is going on here, but I want to hone in on a phrase I find rather shocking — *forget all that*. God recounts how he acted on behalf of the people of Israel. He saved them from slavery in Egypt. He parted the waters of the Red Seas. He led them through the parted waters of the Red Sea. Forget all that; it is nothing compared to what God is going to do. We know God is talking about saving people through Jesus, but I think there is a principle for us as we are in a season of new.

Sometimes we let God’s past works keep us from God’s new works. If we always look back, it’s hard to see what’s ahead. I believe God is doing a new work here in our church. God has done beautiful things in the history of our church, things we remember and rejoice in. But forget all that (metaphorically speaking, of course). What does God have for us *now*? What does God want us to do *now*? I can’t answer this for us, but I have some thoughts.

What would it look like if we took Jesus’ last words to his followers to heart: “*go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you*” (Matthew 28:19-20). What would that look like *now* in Boylston and the greater Worcester area? God wants to work through his church to redeem and restore his creation, which means redeeming and restoring people — or making disciples of Jesus. I am excited for this new year and all the new things I believe God wants to do through us for his Glory and the good of our community.

Praying for you,

Pastor Zac