April 8, 2012
Easter Sunday—the Resurrection of the Lord

"They were saying to one another, 'Who will roll back the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?'"—Mark 16:3

Dear Friends:

Three women approach the tomb on Easter morning. Jesus' invitation to follow him has brought them to what they think is the end of the journey. They anticipate sadness and mourning as they go to perform the last custom to honor the dead. Instead, they find life restored, hope is renewed, the path continues—back to Galilee.

Why does the messenger send the women and us back to Galilee to look for him? What's in Galilee? It is where it all started. That is where Jesus began his ministry—proclaiming Good News to the poor, liberty to captives, healing to the afflicted, and forgiveness to the sinner. The Gospel is telling us we will find the Risen One when we go back to the beginning of Jesus' ministry. When we share of ourselves like him, then he is risen and lives in us. Then he loves, forgives and heals through us.

Sometimes there is a stone that blocks our path to Galilee. We don't think we are worthy or have the ability. We become paralyzed with our own emotions. We would rather keep Jesus safe in the tomb like a precious relic so we do not have to change. We have become frozen and cannot see that God can do something new in us and the world.

The resurrection experience calls the followers of Jesus to be changed. We are called to communities formed in his name, joyfully witnessing and preaching hope and good news, sharing our resources so others may live. The only way that can happen is to have the great stone of our fear and doubt rolled away. It is only the Spirit of the Risen One who can do this for us. I would like to share a litany by Janet Morley:

When we are all despairing;
When the world is full of grief;
When we see no way ahead,
And hope has gone away:

Roll back the stone.

Although we fear change;
Although we are not ready;
Although we'd rather weep
And run away:

Roll back the stone.

Because we're coming with the women;
Because we hope where hope is vain;
Because you call us from the grave
And show the way:

Roll back the stone.

Christ came to overcome fear and ignorance, sin and death in the world. He has shown us the way. Let us follow him through death to new life. Let us find him back in Galilee in the breaking of the bread and our service to each other and the poor. Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Peace and Happy Easter;
Fr Ron and the Staff of St Anne Church