

January 1, 2024 – New Year's Day

He will Make All Things New!

[Ecclesiastes 3: 1-13](#)

¹¹He has made everything beautiful in its time, He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end. (Ecclesiastes 3: 11)

I am often told that as far as dogwood trees go the one in my backyard is huge. I am blessed with a front row seat of God at work as I watch from my double glass doors. The continuing cycle year after year is my reminder: God is consistent in His work.

Fascinated by God's creativity and intricacy, I feel renewed, encouraged and best of all, I feel closer to God. I watch amazed as February's bare, brown, gray branches slowly develop green leaves and form tiny brownish green buds. As the days grow warmer, each day I witness those tiny buds grow a fraction bigger.

By Easter, I see full green leaves with beautiful pink flowers showing through. The flowers over time become wide open to the welcoming sun. All too quickly, spring turns to summer, the flowers start to fall.

Not to be discouraged though, I see that God has provided the perfect shade tree and a home for nesting birds. We enjoy watching a variety of God's creatures seeking shelter from weather and a place to nest.

Around September, bright red berries start forming and the leaves become duller green. Once the berries become ripe and full, the birds migrating south will feast on them for months. By late November, my dogwood has completed its full cycle and is back to the brown, gray bare branches.

The good news is as I watch the dogwood go through the changes, I am reminded that God has always been, and will continue to be.

Every attribute that defines who God is lasts forever. His love for us is eternal, and He will always be in complete control of the universe.

This eternal God created us to be in relationship with Him, and He has fashioned each of us in His own image so that we might reflect to those around us who He is. Like God we have the ability to love and care for others.

God planted within us an expectation that we will be around for the rest of eternity. He offers this eternal destination to all who believe in His wonderful Son, Jesus, who gave his life so that we may be brought back into fellowship with God.

Prayer: *Eternal God, it is through you that we are empowered to be the hands and feet of Jesus. We have been chosen to proclaim the mighty acts of him who called us out of darkness and into His marvelous light. As Christians, we are entrusted with the gospel and the passing on of the faith from generation to generation. We are commissioned with the mission to share the love of Christ with all the world. We pray we are bringing You glory and praise through our humble service, Lord, as we spread Your good news! Amen.*

Tammy Harris
Simpson United Methodist Church, Moundsville, WV
Certified Lay Speaker