Looking Over the Horizon
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“Do you have eyes, and fail to see? Do you have ears, and fail to hear? And do you not remember?” – Mark 8:18

One year ago, many organizations were framing the new year 2020 in terms including “vision” and “sight,” drawing on that obvious optical reference. Considering all that we’ve seen this past year, 2020 was “apocalyptic” in the literal sense of the word: “revelation.” Not in the sense of the end of the world, but an unveiling of reality — the truth. A lot has been revealed.

We have seen how a virus upended the entire world, altering our most basic activities. We’ve seen our relationships in new, more precious ways. We’ve seen ourselves develop greater skills with technology. We’ve seen what is possible on our fragile planet with life at a different pace. We’ve seen the undeniable evidence of our fundamental connectedness as a human species.

We’ve also seen even more evidence of the systemic racism and injustice built into our society. We’ve seen with our own eyes yet another black man killed by police officers. We’ve seen poor people and people of color disproportionally impacted by the pandemic. We’ve seen how essential to a functioning society are the workers making the lowest wages and getting the least protection and support. And early this year we’ve seen an irresponsible leader exploit divisions among us to the point that our very system of self-governance has been threatened.

We’ve seen a lot. We’ve seen things that we cannot UNSEE. A lot has been revealed. And we might understandably be shaken by all that has been revealed.

But as people of faith who use words like “revelation” or “apocalypse,” we do not fear the truth that is being revealed, however uncomfortable or discouraging it may be. We do not fear because we know the one who holds us, the author of TRUTH. Our loving God is in charge, unveiling the truth. Our cruciform creator loves us with an extravagant, overwhelming love that compels us to share it. Nothing we’ve seen can change that, even though it can change the way we see.

So as we look ahead hopefully to a time beyond COVID, let us trust in our loving God to carry us. Whatever the “new normal” looks like, let us embrace the truth — reality — as God reveals it. Let us trust in the God who embraces us and who holds the truth. May we have eyes to see the reconciliation that God is accomplishing in our midst. May we step in and participate.

God, grant us vision for our mission in a new normal.