

Devotion, Week of January 21, 2024

Rev. Jeanne Simpson

We have been in Samoa and Fiji this past week. We have been struck by the vastness of the Pacific Ocean and being tiny little dots of humanity landing on tiny little dots of islands in this enormous sea. We are reminded of the vastness of God's creation, and how little we are as humans in that universe.

The Samoans are of Polynesian descent, similar to Hawaiians. However, the Fijians came from Tanzania in East Africa hundreds of years ago in outrigger canoes. That distance is unbelievable, and it amazes us that they found these islands – these small little places scattered around the Pacific.

What causes humans to want to explore completely unknown territory with little to no idea of what is out there? Is this what makes us explore space? Are we at heart frontier people? Abraham certainly could be described as a frontier explorer. He left his civilized community of Ur in what is today Iraq to go west into the unknown, because God told him there were rich lands there. We Americans are a frontier country by definition – the Europeans who landed here kept heading west looking for treasure and new opportunities.

All through the Bible, God's chosen people migrate to new places, looking for fertile land and opportunities. God actually destroyed the Tower of Babel and told the people to scatter and populate the earth. God wanted them to go explore and settle in new places. In fact, if Adam and Eve hadn't left the garden of Eden, where we would be as a civilization today? God appears to want us to go exploring. And when we explore, we discover delightful things.

At times we explore through our imaginations, rather than physical journeys to new places. May your wanderings, whether physical or intellectual, help you explore God's wonderful creation.

Jeanne & Jim