

## **Devotion, Sixth Week of Eastertide, 2024**

### **Rev. Jeanne Simpson**

New beginnings are always exciting. Our youngest daughter is moving into a brand new house – her first real residence that will belong to her. I've been perusing linen closets and kitchen cabinets for extra stuff for her, and it's been fun – because it not only gives her things she needs, but helps us de-clutter! I think of new programs we've started over the years, like the Babb Project. Or new church developments where the members start out on folding chairs in a borrowed fellowship hall of another church. Just as exciting.

In a way, the planning for our 2025 Homecoming Celebration is a new beginning – we are looking at spiffing up the front steps, painting walls, refreshing bulletin boards, designing a special invitation, and all kinds of neat things. We will celebrate the old – a 200 year old history, but will also look at the new – like our mission projects and outreach activities. Philadelphia Pres spawned several new churches in the area – like Jonesboro and Morrow Pres, and being a “mother church” is a special designation. We were generous and wanted to evangelize new areas, so we sponsored these new congregations.

If at times we feel old and tired, we just need to remember that we are still reaching out in new ways to the community around us. Over twenty children take home meals for the weekend because of our outreach at Babb, and they wear school uniforms we furnished as well. The school has a uniform closet for homeless and near homeless children who arrive unexpectedly and enroll, due to our efforts, and Cathy Morris, David Hatch, Mary Smith, and others should be thanked for all that work. Connie McWilliams constantly works on projects for the Morrow Food Pantry, Kinship Care, and Securus House. Debbie Durden is on the board of Calvary Refuge. Greg is on the board of the Good Shepherd Clinic. PW support all kinds of projects, from Mission Haven to Thornwell Home for Children to Columbia Friendship Circle seminary scholarships. I've probably missed all kinds of other outreach projects you folks are involved in. Every time we do that, someone has a new beginning – because of your generosity. So thank you for helping others have that sense of a new blessing.

*Jeanne*