



LIFE IS  
CHANGING FOR  
FOLKS  
-PASTOR ED

A few weeks ago, I spoke with a church member on the phone and, as we talked about her nephew, her husband and herself, I heard a profound choking sound coming from someone who has been through a lot and her realization that life is changing for her at a fast pace these days. When I hung up the phone, I immediately wrote, "Life is changing for folks, 1/30/25," on a post-it. I placed it on my desk in my church office where I can see it every day.

On one of my hospital visits this past week, I spoke with another church member who had had a couple of surgeries and was feeling weak and sick and, above all, was feeling depressed. During our visit, she told me about some of the things she used to do not long ago and now she is not able to, any longer.

Right then it occurred to me, “She is grieving the rapid changes in her life but she does not realize grieving is what is happening to her.” She was grieving over “what had been” in the past in the face of “what is and will be no more today and tomorrow.” She was grieving over the fact that she used to be able to play with her grandkids and now she is not. And all that made her deeply sad. We then talked about some happy stuff, too. That cheered her up a bit.

“Life is changing for folks,” I wrote on the post-it. I look at it every day.

Someone once said, “change is the only sure and constant thing happening to all of us.” Some changes in life are a good thing but some others we don’t like, for sure. Getting the promotion you have been striving for is a great, rewarding change. However, having to go for doctor’s visits due to a number of health issues for weeks on end now is not how we planned things to be at this point in life.

Life is changing for folks, for all of us. And because life is changing at a fast pace, we tend to look more inwardly and protect ourselves from the outside world. That is a survival mechanism and expected.

As I think about life’s constant changes, I would like to invite you to give people gifts. As you encounter people around you, give them the gift of an extra minute with them, the gift of leaning in and listening in with undivided attention, the gift of making them feel special, the gift of a smile. Give people the gift of a phone call, a text message out of the blue, a note or a card in the mail, a reassuring posting on social media. And do it for them, not expecting any gift in return.

I encourage you not to take your encounters with people for granted. People might be hurting and your gift to them may be the first good thing happening to them in a long time. Sometimes your gift will be a sacrifice, as you might be hurting, as well. That is the gift of you to them, the extra mile.

God gave God-self to us in Jesus Christ. We give because God gave us first. May the Lord awaken our souls to the gift of giving of ourselves as we are filled with God’s given Holy Spirit this Lenten Season.

Amen!