*“Don’t be alarmed! You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised. He isn’t here. Look, here’s the place where they laid him. Go, tell his disciples, especially Peter, that he is going ahead of you into Galilee. You will see him there, just as he told you.”*

*~Mark 16:7-8*

[Dear Friends in Christ],

Christ Has Risen! Christ Has Risen Indeed! Christ has risen and is going on ahead of us. Hurry, there is no time to wait! Do we have the courage to follow Christ?

Mark’s Easter story reminds us that things do not stay the same. Further, it reveals how frightening it can be when your life comes to a halt, when death seems to have the final say and things are not like they used to be.

Just like the disciples, our lives are not the same and we too have found ourselves frightened about what the future holds. [ state some of the ways that your community have been affected by this past year. Example: For some all their hopes and dreams were dashed. Lost loved ones, jobs, childcare, …the unknown future…]

But Jesus is calling us to meet him in Galilee. Why Galilee? Because “Galilee” represents the place where we live. Galilee is our everyday working, eating, sleeping life. And it is in the midst of our toils and troubles, delights and dancing that we discover Jesus and a new way of living. For it was in Galilee that Jesus began his ministry proclaiming the good news of God saying, “Now is the time! Here comes God’s kingdom! Change your hearts and lives and trust this good news!” (Mark 1:15). In Galilee Jesus showed us that God is on the loose, breaking boundaries and defining a new family of faith.

As the family of Christ, we are called to do what Jesus did. It takes courage to invite others to turn back toward God, to be healed, made whole, and transformed from the inside out. It takes courage to break down the barriers that separate us. It takes courage to give our very selves as Jesus did in order to defy death and change the world.

But here is the good news, you have done this as you [ give a concrete example of this – delivered meals – wrote letters – called each other – watched each other’s children – stood up against racism…]

I am so grateful for all the ways that you have given your time, talent, service and finances in order to witness to our community and the world that God indeed is on the loose through Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. We hope we can count on your generosity again so that together we can make a difference in Galilee. [insert how to make a donation or consider adding this info to a PS below the signature]

Amen & Amen,