

**Fifth Sunday in Lent, April 3, 2022**

**Text: Isaiah 43:18-19 (NRSV)**

### **A New Thing**

God is always doing a new thing. Lent has provided generations of Christians a season for meditation and reflection. Lent is a perfect season to experience a new thing in God.

The Lord knows, after the last two years, we are ready to experience a new thing in God. Many have died from COVID 19, but many are surviving its effects having gained a new understanding of how important it is to cherish life. Many congregations have had to suspend in-person worship and ministry, but many are reopening the doors of the church having adopted new ways to worship and engage in ministry. Many families have lost homes and possessions due to natural disasters, but many have rebuilt their homes and lives with new understanding about what matters most in life. Even in the midst of suffering, God can do a new thing. With this understanding, it is our prayer that the people of Ukraine will experience new things in God when the brutal and inhumane invasion of their country ends.

In Isaiah 43:18-19, we find these words from the Prophet Isaiah: “Do not remember the former things or consider the things of old. *I am about to do a new thing*, now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? . . .” Israel found itself in bondage, again. This time in Babylon. The Israelites had been unfaithful. However, God’s covenant relationship with Israel meant that God is not a God who will desert his people. If we trust God, even in trying times, God will do a new thing.

The message of Isaiah 43:18-19 remains the same today. God says to us as I have done in the past, I am doing a new thing in your healing, in your rebuilding, and in your deliverance. “I am doing a new thing.”

Prayer: God, of new things, give us spiritual eyes to perceive the new things you are doing in us, our lives, and your world.

Rev. T. Kenneth Venable serves as the Presiding Elder for the Petersburg District, Virginia Conference, Mid-Atlantic Episcopal District, African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. Both he and his wife were raised in a small black community in southeastern Baltimore County, Maryland, called Turner Station. Rev. Venable served 20 years in the Army, worked in corporate America, taught sixth grade for nine years, and had been a Transfer Coordinator at Virginia State University. He holds a BA degree in Elementary Education from Morgan State University, a MA degree in Management and Supervision from Central Michigan University, and a M. Div. degree from the Samuel Dewitt Proctor School of Theology. In addition to having been married to his wife, Gene, for 52 years, they have two children and three grandchildren.

