

May 2018

Greetings,

This past week I received a wonderful gift – a clerical stole woven from Kente fabric. I love it! Not only are the givers beloved members of Community Baptist, the stole's Ghanaian origin is a treasured reminder of the bonds between Commonwealth nations and peoples.

The stole has the initials “CBC” woven into the cloth. Naturally, this occasioned some humorous protestations from everyone concerned! My new vestment is a very visible declaration of my commitment to Community Baptist.

Visual displays of feelings and beliefs are not something I tend to go in for. My car is not bedecked with bumper stickers that proclaim, “I ♥ NY” – or any other city. No loved one is inked into my skin.

I might be too reticent! The prophet Isaiah tells us that God has tattooed our names on the palms of his hands (49:16). It is a sign that God will never forget us or forsake us.

Isaiah's language is poetical ~& anthropomorphic. We know that God does not possess “hands”; nor is a tattoo artist needed for us to be permanently embedded within the Divine self. But, despite its very human imagery, I like the idea of us being inked onto God's palms: “I♥Jill” & “LuvUJoe”. All of creation is squeezed into these cosmic circles of care: “My♥Belongs to a Panda” & “The Rainforest Rocks”!

What would you do to save a person, a species or a place on Earth that God loves that much?

*Can a mother forget her little child and not have love for her own son? Yet even if that should be, I will not forget you. See, I have tattooed your name upon my palm.*

*(Isaiah 49: 15-16a The Living Bible)*

Blessings,

*Brenda*