

THE PARISH LIGHT

November 2020



Thanksgiving was a day when we paused to give thanks for the things we have.

Remembrance Day is a day when we pause to give thanks to the people who fought for the things we have..

The Story of Amazing Grace

John Newton was a slave trader.

He trafficked thousands of men, women and children from Africa to the auction block.

In 1748, a violent storm threatened to sink his ship. He fell to his knees and prayed to God for mercy.

It was that night that John Newton sensed that there is a God who hears and answers prayers....even for the worst of men.

Over time Newton repented, became a preacher....and writer of hymns. In 1772, he wrote a hymn called...."Faiths Review and Expectation."

A song you know as...."Amazing Grace"

It has become the most popular song in history. A song that with a few notes has become a song that inspires hope in the wake of tragedy, lifts the heads of the hopeless....and softens the hearts of the hardened.

Amazing Grace was sung by both sides of the American civil war ...and was used as a requiem by the Cherokee Indians on the Trail of Tears. Civil Rights protesters sang it defiantly during freedom marches.....and on that sweltering August day Dr. King shared his dream. Amazing Grace rang out when Nelson Mandela was released from prisonand when the Berlin wall came crumbling down, and on September 11th.

It has been repeated to comfort a mourning world.

Grace has the power to reform, to right the wrongs, and turn a man, who once traded slaves....into one that fought for their freedom.

Through many dangers , toils and snares we have already come:

'Tis grace that brought us safe thus far....

And grace will lead us home."

Halloween in the Arctic.

It would have been 1980 or 81. We had moved from Cambridge Bay, NWT (now Nunavut) to Holman Island, NWT (now called Uluhaktuk"). A DC 3 airplane was hired for the move. I was told by the bishop, "If it fits into the plane, you can take it, if it doesn't you can't." It meant leaving behind an armchair rocker bought for Sheila when she had our first baby. It was the only piece of furniture we owned, as the mission houses were supposed to be fully furnished. We were sad to leave it behind. The flight was only about 2 hours long. The only passengers were Sheila and I plus our 3 year old son David. What made me a little nervous was most of the rubber was missing from the freight door across from me and at times I could see the land beneath through the doors.

The summer and fall were busy getting settled in this small community of 300 people. Unpacking and visiting and getting ready for the snow which came in September to stay. We also spent much time getting to know the people, as over 80 percent of the people were Anglican and Sunday attendance was around 80 people. Needless to say it was busy.

October brought more snow and Halloween. I, for one, was looking forward to taking our son out for the first time. I have to admit that it was very different than when I was growing up in Toronto as a boy. We had to make adjustments. Firstly at that time Halloween was not celebrated by most of the Inuit. It wasn't a Christian celebration after all. There was however about a dozen people from the south who hoped for trick or treaters and enough of the kids knew if they went to the southern homes they would get treats. So I made a list of homes to visit.

Costumes were a problem. It was 30 below with 5 inches of snow. That meant a parka with a large hood, snow boots, mitts, scarf and snow pants. Somewhere beneath all that was my 3 year old son. That meant only part of the face was exposed. We started with one of those plastic masks. But it would not stay on and the string kept breaking. We had to settle with some of the stove ash on the face. It was the only part of him visible. I got the snow machine ready with the boxed sled behind it and we were ready to go.

I had to lift him in the sled because he could not climb in himself holding on to the pillowcase which he refused to let go of. At the first house I realize it was going to be a long night. He had to be lifted out of the sled and he couldn't knock on the door so I had to. When they did open he shouted the practiced phrase "Treat or trick" – Close enough. The lady looked at him and said, "and what are you?" David honestly said "I do not know, maybe a boy". After she stopped laughing she put some treats into the pillowcase and said good bye. David wanted to stop and eat what he had first but dad was mean. No eating until you get home.

At the next home we picked up 4 other kids who jumped into the sled. That was our bubble for the night. They would dutifully take David up to the home and knock on the door. They made sure the candy went into the right bag and brought him back.

After the fourth house David wanted to go home. It was 30 below after all and the wind was cold. The other kids got him to go another two homes because after all when David went home so did their ride. Soon it got too cold and the kids said good bye and we went home.

Inside with all the coats, snow pants, and scarfs off him I noticed we had only been gone 45 minutes. David after warming up was happy with his bag of loot, I got to take my son out on his first Halloween trip, so all in all things were ok. Not normal but ok.

I hope you all have fun this Halloween. Be safe in whatever you do. Wear a mask, keep your distance and have fun. It may not be normal but make the best of it.

Again be safe.

Bishop Larry Robertson

Bishop in Charge.



Message from Rev. Rose

Over the past two months, I have been watching the squirrels run back and forth, collecting their tree pinecones, and stashing them away in a hole near the house. They were always cautious, stopping to check for any predators. Winter preparations at its finest. Today as I drove into the driveway, (I always stop to make sure one of them do not jump out in front of me) I catch a glimpse of the branches shaking. They were chasing after each other as they leap from branch to branch, tree to tree. They seem so carefree. As I stood there watching them for about 10 minutes, I thought to myself, they must have completed their preparations for winter. Now they are free to play. I can hear that still small voice of the Spirit saying, "You too work hard in your ministry, preparing my little squirrels for the work the Lord. Do not forget to remind them that it is good for them to play and have fun."

Nehemiah 8:10 (NIV)

10 Nehemiah said, "Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is holy to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength."

While it is good that we give our absolute best, it is necessary to stop and have fun along the way. Otherwise, ministry becomes a burden, and we are no longer joyful. For many of us, as Christians, we do not think it is proper to have fun and serve the Lord. Remember the time when Jesus went to a wedding. He not only preformed a miracle of turning water into wine, but he also celebrated in the wedding feast as a guest, (John 2:1-11). When we find our joy in the Lord, He renews our energy, and restores our strength so we can carry on in our ministries. No joy equals frustrations, sadness, burdens, and burnout. It is good to take some time to enjoy the little things in life like squirrels running around.

- Sing hymns that are meaningful to you. I betcha your toes will tap. You may find yourself humming along later in the day. I know I do. This will brighten up your spirits and will shine forth out of you.
- Do not forget to have those little conversations with the Lord throughout your day. He always has time for his children, and he loves to show us marvellous things.
- Visit with a good friend for coffee/tea and play a game you like.

We do not always have to be so serious. Christ too enjoyed many moments with his disciples, and they still carried on with the ministry that was set before them. After all we are called to follow after our Lord in all things. Just a thought!

Work hard,

Love hard,

Play hard,



The Rev. Rosemarie Howell,

Associate Priest, Triune of Parishes

Monster Rehab - Matthew 23:1-12 by Leonard Sweet

For the last few weeks we've all been subjected to reruns of every scary movie ever made: zombies, vampires, guys in hockey masks, spooks with really long fingernails. Monsters in all shapes and forms are the flavor of the month of October.

It's hardly surprising that, as usual, popular culture has gotten the point of "All Hallows Eve" all wrong and totally forgets that the ultimate point is to celebrate "All Saints Day." The monsters get center stage and adulation. The saints are left to clean up the popcorn and sticky soda on the theater floor.

But the Church has gotten this All Hallows/All Saints holiday all wrong too. We've been convinced that "monsters" are easily identifiable. We think "monsters" are weird, warped, obviously wicked, bent on murder, mayhem and mischief. Alas, outside Hollywood "monsters" are not so easily identifiable.

A classic "monster" is a creature that takes the best of its qualities and uses them in a horribly wrong way. The amazing ability of bats to negotiate the darkness of night by using sonic signals to hunt swiftly and silently is made murderous by, "the vampire." The agility and intelligence, strength and speed of the wolf are transformed into the terror of the hybrid hunter, "the werewolf."

What the movies miss is that the worst kinds of "monsters" don't take away life in an instant. They suck away our souls over time.

In today's gospel text Jesus was preaching against "monsters," individuals who took those qualities that should have brought out the best in them, and yet instead they warped those gifts into a misshapen, misinformed message.

All Saints Day

All Saints Day is a Day to celebrate the saints in our lives. These are the persons who take the best that is in us and use it for the betterment of God and the world.

For me one of the Saints in my life was an elderly First Nations woman in Inuvik, NWT named Sarah Simons. Just sitting with her drinking buckets of tea I could sense a presence of the spirit of God around her. But more so than any feeling I had was her humble spirit that came out in the selfless love she showered on all she came in contact with. There was not a person in the community of Fort McPherson where she live that did not have a story of how Sarah had touched her life. Teach their children; sit for hours with a person while they died, caring for countless sick, never once asking for anything, never once expecting anything. Her life, her behaviour, her selfless sacrifice of her time talents and money changed my life in a way I cannot explain. She was a true example of a Saint that we are meant to celebrate this All Saints Day. Who are the saints who have touched your life? Take a moment to give thanks to God for their life and the gift that they have been to you. Ask for the grace to reflect that same self-sacrificial love when you deal with others around you.

Have a blessed All Saints Day

Rt Rev Larry Robertson

Priest in Charge

Trinity of Parishes - Living Waters, Northern Lights, Athabasca

Grandpa's Face

A little girl was sitting next to her grandfather as he read her a bedtime story.

From time to time, she would take her eyes off the book and reach up and touch his wrinkled face. She touched her own cheek after she touched his.

After a little while of thinking, she asked, "Grandpa, did God make you?"

He looked at her and said, "Yes sweetheart, God made me a long time ago." She paused for a few seconds and then asked, "Grandpa, did God make me too?"

He replied, "Yes, indeed pumpkin, God made you just a little while ago."

Feeling their respective faces again, she whispered to him, "God's getting better at it, isn't he?"

Two people read the same Bible

One sees reasons to love

The other sees reasons to hate

One sees unity

The other division

One discovers compassion.

The other, indifference.

One goodwill.

The other malice.

Two people, one book. One Book, two views.

The book is a mirror.

The reflection is you.

*Oh Lord, when I grow weary, please help me to remember each and every day: To count my blessings and not my crosses; to count my gains and not my losses; to count my laughs and not my tears; to count my joys and not my fears; to count my health and not my wealth; and most of all ... to count on **GOD** and not myself.*

God is sitting in Heaven when a scientist says to Him, "Lord, we don't need you anymore. Science has finally figured out a way to create life out of nothing. In other words, we can now do what you did in the 'beginning'."

"Oh, is that so? Tell me" Replies God.

"Well", says the scientist, "we can take dirt and form it into the likeness of you and breathe life into it, thus creating man."

"Well, that's interesting. Show Me."

So the scientist bends down to the earth and starts to mold the soil.

"Oh no, no, no..." interrupts God, "Get your own dirt."

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Whatever our hands touch we leave fingerprints  
On walls, on furniture, on doorknobs, dishes, books.

There is no escape.

As we touch we leave our identity.

Wherever I go today help me leave heartprints.  
Heartprints of compassion, of understanding and love.  
Heartprints of kindness and genuine concern.

May my heart touch a lonely neighbor

Or a runaway daughter

Or an anxious mother

Or perhaps an aged grandfather.

Send me out today to leave heartprints.

And if someone should say

"I felt your touch."

May they also sense the love that is deep within my heart.

..... Author unknown

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Ministry Gifts

Have you ever thought that you would occasionally like to share your music gift? Well, here is an opportunity! We are looking for musicians and lead singers for the Nine Lessons and Carols services for a few of our congregations - December 13th & 20th.

Please contact Bishop Larry Robertson (780) 213-4099 or Rev. Rose Howell at (780) 558-9074.



1. November 4th, St Andrew's Zion **Council Meeting**, St Andrew's Zion, Colinton - 7:00 pm
2. November 18th, **Parish of the Northern Light Parish Council meeting**
St Paul's, Boyle ` 7:00 pm
3. November 29th, **5th Sunday Service**, Perryvale Community Hall -
11:00 am Bring your own lunch
4. December 11th, **Social Gathering** - (in lieu of Bishop's Open House due to Covid)
7:00 pm - St Paul's Church, Boyle

Bible Studies: St Paul's Boyle, Wednesday at 10:00 am
St Andrew's Zion Bible Study - Anglican Rectory ~ Tuesday at 7:15 pm

Coffeetime: Community coffeetime – First and third Thursday of each month
Upcoming for November: November 5th & 19th – 10:30 to 12:00 noon

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