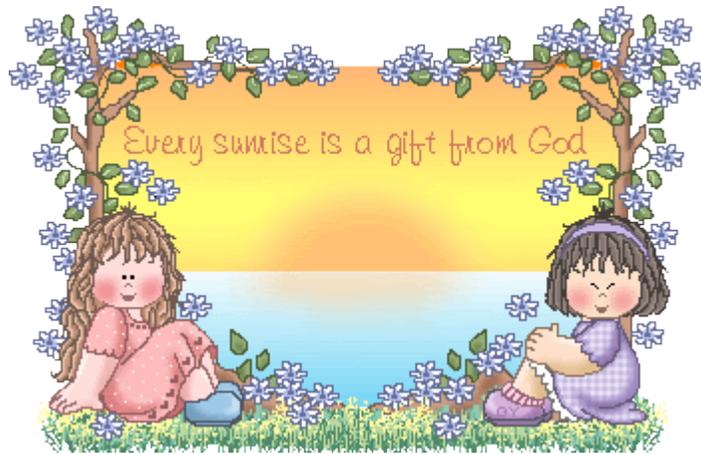


The Parish Light

The Parish of the Northern Lights Newsletter – May 2020



How the Virus Stole Easter

By Kristi Bothur

With a nod to Dr. Seuss 😊

Tw'as late in '19 when the virus began - bringing chaos and fear to all people, each land.

People were sick, hospitals full, doctors overwhelmed, no one in school.

As winter gave way to the promise of spring, the virus raged on, touching peasant and king.

People hid in their homes from the enemy unseen. They YouTubed and Zoomed, social-distanced, and cleaned.

April approached and churches were closed. "There won't be an Easter," the world supposed.

"There won't be church services, and egg hunts are out. No reason for new dresses when we can't go about."

Holy Week started, as bleak as the rest. The world was focused on masks and on tests.

"Easter can't happen this year," it proclaimed. "Online and at home, it just won't be the same."

Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, the days came and went. The virus pressed on; it just would not relent.

The world woke Sunday and nothing had changed. The virus still menaced, the people, estranged.

"Pooh pooh to the saints," the world was grumbling. "They're finding out now that no Easter is coming.

"They're just waking up! We know just what they'll do!

Their mouths will hang open a minute or two, and then all the saints will all cry boo-hoo.

"That noise," said the world, "will be something to hear." So it paused and the world put a hand to its ear.

And it did hear a sound coming through all the skies. It started down low, then it started to rise.

But the sound wasn't depressed.

Why, this sound was triumphant! It couldn't be so! But it grew with abundance!

The world stared around, popping its eyes. Then it shook! What it saw was a shocking surprise!

Every saint in every nation, the tall and the small, was celebrating Jesus in spite of it all!

It hadn't stopped Easter from coming! It came! Somehow or other, it came just the same!

And the world with its life quite stuck in quarantine...

Stood puzzling and puzzling. "Just how can it be?"

"It came without bonnets, it came without bunnies, it came without egg hunts, cantatas, or money."

Then the world thought of something it hadn't before. "Maybe Easter," it thought, "doesn't come from a store.

Maybe Easter, perhaps, means a little bit more." And what happened then?

Well....the story's not done.

What will YOU do? Will you share with that one or two or more people needing hope in this night?

Will you share the source of your life in this fight? The churches are empty - but so is the tomb,

And Jesus is victor over death, doom, and gloom .

So this year at Easter, let this be our prayer, as the virus still rages all around, everywhere.

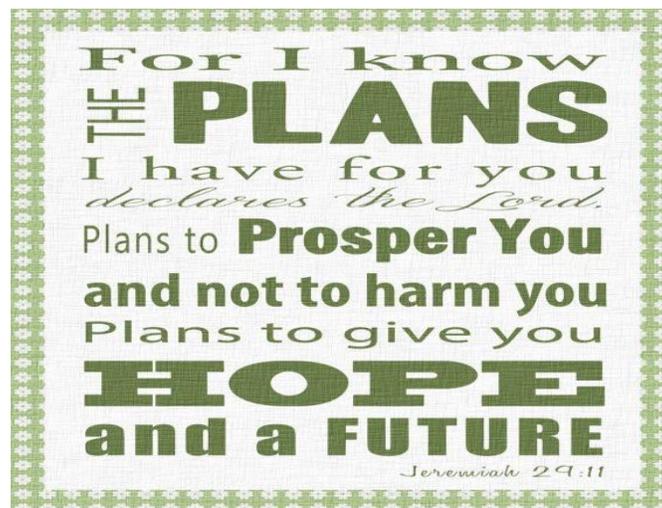
May the world see hope when it looks at God's people.

May the world see the church is not a building or steeple.

May the world find Faith in Jesus' death and resurrection, May the world find Joy in a time of dejection.

May 2020 be known as the year of survival, But not only that -

Let it start a revival!



The very first Easter was not in a crowded worship space with singing and praising. On the very first Easter, the disciples were locked in their house. It was dangerous for them to come out. They were afraid. They wanted to believe the good news they heard from the woman, that Jesus had risen. But it seemed too good to be true. They were living in a time of such despair and such fear, if they left their homes their lives and the lives of their loved ones might be at risk. Could a miracle really have happened? Could life really had won out over death? Could this time of terror and fear really be the coming to an end?

Alone in their homes they dared to believe that hope was possible, that the long night was over and morning had broken, that God's love was the most powerful of all, even though it didn't seem quite real yet. Eventually, they were able to leave their homes, when the fear and danger had subsided they went around celebrating and spreading the good news that Jesus was risen and love was the most powerful force on the earth.

This year, we might get to experience a taste of what that first Easter was like, still in our homes daring to believe that hope is on the horizon. Then, after a while, when it is safe for all people, when it is the most loving choice, we will come out gathering together, singing and shouting the good news that God brings life even out of death, that love always has the final say!

This year we might get the closest taste we have had yet to what that first Easter was like.

..... Anne P Jyrwa



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"I've decided if they don't have chocolate in heaven, I don't want to go."

WHEN YOU THOUGHT I WASN'T LOOKING

When you thought I wasn't looking, you hung my first painting on the refrigerator
and I wanted to paint another.

When you thought I wasn't looking, you fed a stray cat
And I thought it was good to be kind to animals.

When you thought I wasn't looking, you baked a birthday cake just for me
And I knew that little things were special things.

When you thought I wasn't looking, you kissed me goodnight
And I felt loved.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw tears come to your eyes
And I learned its okay to cry.

When you thought I wasn't looking, you smiled
And it made me want to look that pretty too.

When you thought I wasn't looking, you cared
And I wanted to be everything that I could be.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I looked and wanted to say thanks
For all those things you did when you thought I wasn't looking.



MESSAGES FROM THE NORTH

From Bishop Larry Robertson



By the time I first met the Rev. Dr. Ellen Bruce, she was already a legend not only in the north but throughout the Anglican Church in Canada. The words that seem to be used most to describe her was “humble” and “powerful”. I was the minister in charge of the Church of the Ascension in Inuvik and the regional dean for the McKenzie Delta Deanery of the Diocese of the Arctic. When I got a phone call from the Bishop of the Yukon asking if I would go over to Old Crow, Yukon and give Rev. Bruce a hand with a funeral of a noted politician and his son who died in a tragic boat accident, the bodies were never found, I responded immediately with a yes - as is the way of the north, always prepared to help when needed.

I have to admit I was a bit excited to be able to meet the legend I had heard some much about. She was the first indigenous women to be ordained a priest in the Anglican Church. When I got off the plane and walked into the little building used as a terminal, I was met by a little elderly lady in very much typical clothing of the elderly of that area. She had scarf tied around her head, a dress that went down to her ankles, not quite hiding the rubber boots she was wearing on her feet. As she held out her fragile little hand she said, “Hello I am Ellen, are you the one the bishop said was coming to help me?” That began a relationship that lasted many years until she passed away and an influence that still affects me.

Over the week I spent there we must have visited at least half of the families. Rev. Bruce would lead me into a home. All conversation would stop. There was a reverence, a respect given to this little lady that I have seldom seen elsewhere. When she began to pray I knew I was in the presence of a holy person. In her quiet gentle voice, there was authority and love which touched the hearts of all within the hearing. I felt like I was sitting at the feet of one of the disciples - someone who had a close relationship with the Master, with Jesus.

In 1999 about a month after I was made a Bishop, we had a celebration of the 100th anniversary of the translation of the Bible into the local language. Ellen came to celebrate with us. She spoke at the main service and again I felt I was a novice sitting at the foot of the teacher. In that service I was presented with a white stole as a gift. Rev. Bruce, this gentle spiritual giant blessed it and placed it on me. It was one of the moments I will remember as a great honour in my ministry.

Spiritual authority, spiritual power, and spiritual love appear in people who have great devotions for our Lord. And I was blessed and honoured to have sat at her feet, for in her the power of God dwelt.

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

Greetings in the name of the Risen Lord Jesus Christ. He who was raised from the dead has victory over death. We, part of the family of God, also have victory over death and nothing can overcome the victory and security we have in Jesus.

For 6 weeks now our buildings have been closed to us because of the Covid19 Virus pandemic that has attacked the world. The buildings may be closed but the Church is still very much alive and Active in the world.

The Parish of Northern Lights has moved ahead in areas it has never been before in order to minister to its people and the communities around it. The following is a summary of what we have done so far.

1. On Sundays evenings we have Services through the internet media of ZOOM. Allowing us to meet and worship live - allowing us to fellowship if only through the internet. We have even found a way to have Holy Communion.
2. For families and children confined to home we have started Family Fun, a program of lessons and colouring on the Sunday Gospel.
3. After checking with Alberta Health and our Bishop, we have been able to have a limited outdoor service in areas where they are unable to access the internet service.
4. We are going to try to have a social night (the Church in the North) via the Internet on May the 11th at 7pm. This will be a time to interact, learn and have fellowship. Watch our webpage and St. Andrews/Zion Facebook page for a link to join.
5. The Tuesday Bible study continues again via Zoom. For links to the Bible Study contact Cathy Creaser (587-746-0110)
6. Congregational and parish meetings continue via the Internet.

None of the above is as good as meeting in person. Nevertheless, The Church continues. I am always looking for ways to reach our members and our community. If you have ideas please contact me.

Blessings

Bishop Larry Robertson, Interim Minister

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*Sometimes the Lord puts us on our backs so we **have** to look up!*

CALENDAR of Events

Communion Sunday, May 3rd

Those wishing to participate in communion with reserved sacrament,

Reserved wafers will be available at the following times and places

On **Saturday, May 2nd**

St Andrew's Zion Church at 1:00 pm

St Paul's Church, Boyle at 4:00 pm

Communion Service will be held via Zoom at 7:00 pm Sunday evening

If you require more information, please contact Bishop Larry

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Exciting news!

Watch for information on the forthcoming

Church in the North

Monday evening, May 11th

Via Zoom

Bishop Larry has some interesting guest speakers.

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Bible Study

Every Tuesday evening at 7:15 pm

Via Zoom

For more information, please contact Cathie Creaser

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*The only way God can show us He's in control is to put us in situations we can't control.*

..... *Steven Furtick*