

# THE PARISH LIGHT 2020

The Parish of the Northern Lights Newsletter January 2020

2020  
HAPPY NEW YEAR!

## SAILING INTO THE NEW YEAR

God built and launched this year for you;  
Upon the bridge you stand;  
It's your ship, aye, your own ship,  
And you are in command.  
Just what the twelve months' trip will do  
Rests wholly, solely, friend, with you.  
Your logbook kept from day to day  
My friend, what will it show?  
Have you on your appointed way  
Made progress, yes or no?  
The log will tell, like guiding star,  
The sort of captain that you are.  
For weal or woe this year is yours;  
Your ship is on life's sea  
You acts, as captain, must decide  
Whichever it shall be;  
So now in starting on your trip,  
Ask God to help you sail your ship.  
..... Author unknown



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By  
JEFF  
KEANE

"Then the three wise men came to baby-sit Jesus so Mary and Joseph could finish Christmas shopping."

## The Rector's Message

The New Year is upon us. At this time of the year many of us make resolutions regarding what we will do in the upcoming year. I am embarrassed to admit to you that although I have made many resolutions, I have also left many of them all too soon in the new year. If you are one of those people who make resolutions, I would suggest that you think about them and make resolutions that are achievable and are beneficial to you or those around you. If you make resolutions with a friend who will support and be with you, all the better.

As a Parish, the new year holds much in store for us. Firstly we must, with the guidance of our new bishop, search for and choose a parish priest who will walk with you into the future in the service of God. I do not need to tell you how important this choice is to the Parish.

Secondly, we as a parish will need to face the reality of our financial position. Can we continue on as we are and still be self-supporting? What do we have to do to continue on in this way?

Thirdly, we need to look at the fact that our congregations are getting older and soon will not be able to support what we already have if we do not get more members and to have more members active in our churches.

All three things above will, of necessity, require change in our parish. Are we up to it? Are we willing to change? Exactly what form this change will take is unknown, but unless we are prepared to make necessary changes, we will slowly fade away and have little influence in our communities.

The Holy Family endured change. They went from an emerging family to being refugees to returning to their land and settling in a different place at a time of fear and uncertainty. They had to depend on each other and upon God to move forward. Yet despite the troubled times God was able to use this family to raise the one who would become the Saviour of the World.

In the new year let us move forward, working together and depending on our Lord to equip, guide and strengthen us. We may not know what the future holds for us, but we do know that together, depending on God, we can do all things necessary to be in God's will.

Let us go forward together! Let us go forward in Love! Let us go forward in the Lord.

Blessings

Bishop Larry Robertson.



## Lessons from the North

As the Bishop of Yukon, which is part of the Council of North, as is the Diocese of Athabasca, I was invited to attend the Sacred Circle, which was held every 3 years, put on by the Anglican Council of Indigenous People (ACIP) of the Anglican Church of Canada. In the meeting they discussed the various issues concerning Indigenous Anglicans. I would attend with indigenous members of the Yukon Diocese who were also members of ACIP.

During one meeting I was approached by the then Primate, the Most Rev. Fred Hiltz concerning one of the Yukon delegates. He said that he had a marvelous talk with one of my elder delegates, Bessie Coolie. He then asked me a question that made me laugh. He asked if this sweet elderly lady would be able to follow what was going on in the meeting, as it was all in English and going on quite rapidly. I replied that I would not worry about that as she has 2 degrees, one in languages and the other I think in teaching. He later humbly apologized to Bessie for his assumptions. Bessie just smiled in her disarming way and accepted his apology.

There is an old saying that “you should never judge a book by its cover.” We so often do exactly that with people. We make erroneous assumptions about people intelligence based on their race or colour or language or looks. We often make value judgements on the same bases. One thing I have learned from living in the North is that you can’t judge a person or his/her values or worth by one’s race, language social status or appearance. In the north there are several cultures mixed together. I have seen people make erroneous judgements on others which have caused much harm and have become a basis for prejudice in many people.

As Christians we need to be in touch with our thoughts and judgements. Are they based on fact or assumptions and prejudices that we have. All too often we harbour prejudices without knowing it. We see people and make assumptions about them without knowing them. The North has taught me that appearance or race or education cannot tell a person’s character or values. We need to take the time to get to know them, and when we do we will realize that although we each look different we all have the same need to be loved and accepted. As one friend said, underneath we all bleed red. May we take that time and get to know the people around us and not be quick to just.

## A New Year’s Prayer for Those Growing Older

Lord, though knowest better than I know myself that I am growing older and will someday be old. Keep me from the fatal habit of thinking I must say something on every subject and on every occasion. Release me from craving to try to straighten out everybody’s affairs.

Make me thoughtful but not moody; helpful but not bossy. With my vast store of wisdom, it seems a pity not to use it all – but thou knowest Lord that I want a few friends at the end.

Keep my mind from the recital of endless details – give me wings to get to the point. Seal my lips on my aches and pains. They are increasing and the love of rehearsing them is becoming sweeter as the years go by.

I dare not ask for grace enough to enjoy the tales of others, but help me endure them with patience.

Teach me to be reasonably sweet. I don’t want to be a saint – some of them as so hard to live with – but a sour old person is one of the crowning works of the devil.

Give me the ability to see good things in unexpected places and talents in unexpected people. Give me the grace to tell them so.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

## An unspoken Bible

Author unknown

His name is Bill. He has wild hair, wears a T-shirt with holes in it, jeans and no shoes. This literally was his wardrobe for the entire four years of college. He is brilliant. Kind of esoteric and very, very bright. He became a Christian recently while attending college.

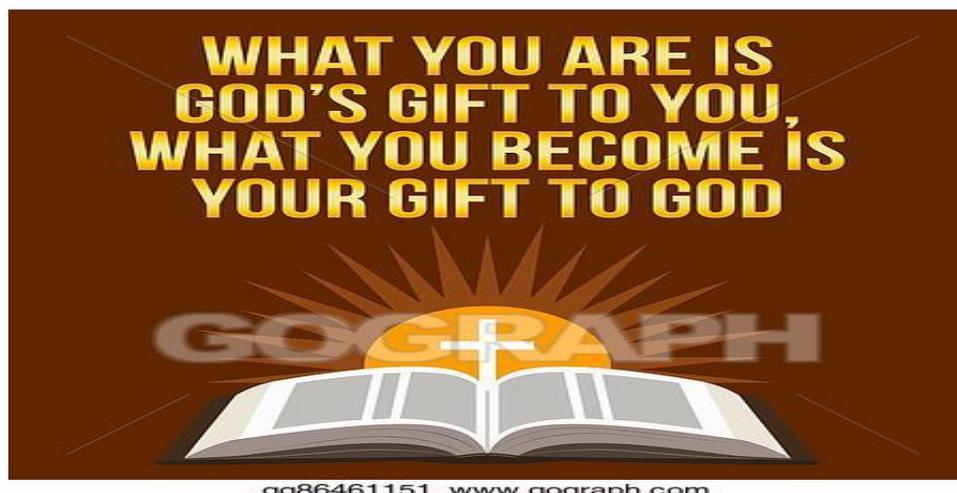
Across the street from the campus is a well-dressed, very conservative church. One day, Bill decides to go there. He walks in with no shoes, jeans, his T-shirt and wild hair. The service has already started and so Bill starts down the aisle looking for a seat.

The church is completely packed and he can't find a seat. By now the people are really looking a bit uncomfortable, but no one says anything. Bill gets closer, and closer, and closer to the pulpit and when he realizes there are no seats, he just squats down right on the carpet (although perfectly acceptable behavior at a college fellowship). But trust me, this has never happened in this church before.

By now, the people were really uptight and the tension in the air was thick. About this time, the minister realizes that from way at the back of the church, an Elder is slowly making his way toward Bill. Now the Elder is in his eighties, has silver grey hair and a three piece suit,. A godly man, very elegant, very dignified, very courtly. He walks with a cane and, as he starts walking toward this boy, everyone is saying to themselves that you can't blame him for what he's going to do. How can you expect a man of his age and of his background to understand some college kid sitting on the floor? It takes a long time for the man to reach the boy. The church is utterly silent except for the clicking of the man's cane.

All eyes were focused on him. You can't even hear anyone breathing. The minister can't even preach the sermon until the Elder does what he has to do. And now they see this elderly man drop his cane on the floor. With great difficulty, he lowers himself and sits down next to Bill and worships with him so he won't be alone.

Everyone chokes up with emotion. When the minister gains control, he says, "What I'm about to preach, you will never remember. What you have just seen, you will never forget. Be careful how you live. You may be the only Bible some people will ever read."



## Four Ways to Look

Joan was struggling with some difficult issues with her children when she sat down for a worship service. Exhausted, she wanted to “resign” from motherhood. Then the speaker began to share encouragement for those who feel like quitting. These four thoughts that Joan heard that morning helped her to keep going.

**Look up and pray.** Asaph prayed all night long and even expressed feelings that God had forgotten and rejected him in Psalm 7:9-10. We can tell God everything and be honest about our feelings. We can ask Him anything. His answer will not come right away or in the form we want or expect, but He won’t criticize us for asking.

**Look back and remember what God has done in the past for you and others.** Asaph didn’t talk to God only about the pain; he also recalled God’s power and mighty works for him and God’s people. He wrote, “I will remember the deeds of the Lord; yes, I will remember your miracles of long ago” (v.11)

**Look forward.** Think about the good that might come out of the situation. What might you learn? What might God want to do? What do you know He will do because His ways are perfect? (v 13)

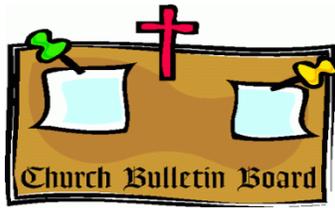
**Look again** This time look at your circumstances with eyes of faith. Remind yourself that He is the God of great wonders and can be trusted. (v14)

May these ideas help us gain perspective and keep moving in our faith journey through Jesus.

## Prescription for Loneliness

Art thou lonely, O my brother?  
Share thy little with another!  
Stretch a hand to one unfriended,  
And thy loneliness is ended.  
..... John Oxenham





January 5<sup>th</sup> – Carolling at St Andrew’s Zion -  
January 6<sup>th</sup> – Parish Council meeting St Paul’s, Boyle at 7:15  
January 19<sup>th</sup> – Parish service – St Andrew’s Zion, Colinton  
Lutheran Bishop Larry Kochendorfer officiating  
Potluck follows  
February 23<sup>rd</sup> – **Parish Annual General Meeting** – Potluck  
January 19<sup>th</sup> – Worship Altar Training – St Andrew’s Zion, Colinton

### **Mission To Belize**

As many of you are aware that Judy Flax, Bishop Larry and Sheila Robertson of this parish are going to Belize as part of a team of 5 to do mission work in one of the Schools run by the Anglican Church there.

We are going to St. Paul’s by the Sea in Corozal, Belize. We will work in the classrooms of this elementary teacher teaching about Jesus in song and story. The schools there have very little in the forms of supplies or money to get supplies and necessary equipment. If there are some who would like to contribute something to the school please let one of us know. A gift earmarked for Belize mission through the parish will get you an income tax receipt. All gifts will be taken and given to the school. The team pays all of their own expenses as well as using their holiday time to go.

On the return, the team will hopefully have an evening to speak about the Mission.

Please pray for us we go and for the School as they seek to serve God in Belize.

Blessings

Bishop Larry Robertson

### **Tuesday 7:15 pm Small group Bible Study:**

“I am not really familiar with the Bible. I find it difficult to understand,” is a cautious comment our Bible study group members hear a lot when they invite others to come and check us out. But when others come, they discover very fast that we are fellow learners, and none of us claims to be an expert. One participant said it well, “Scriptures involve both head and heart knowledge..”

It is through sharing, sometimes veering off from texts before texts that new learnings emerge, and we are able to make connections between these ancient writings and our everyday lives. Then we hear comments, “You know, this connects with what we talked about last week.”

At the end of our evening together, we might leave with more questions than we came in with. Yet, we also leave reassured that Jesus, who knew human suffering and trials, understands the aches of our heart and the anxiety of our minds. We can leave in peace. We are not alone. We are accompanied by the heartfelt blessings of our fellow explorers and the assurance that we are loved by God. ....Excerpt from Eternity for Today

***Our Small group Bible Study meets every Tuesday night at the home of Jan Overacker. We invite you to join us or come to ‘check us out’. If you have any questions, please contact Cathie Creaser, 780-689-7087***