

THE PARISH LIGHT

The Parish of the Northern Lights Newsletter - June 2016

Connected By Love

I'm not sure where to start this time. We've just finished a very busy, and an emotional roller coaster, weekend in the parish. Ten youth, along with three leaders — Joanna, Cathie and Curtis, were off at YC in Edmonton. Terry Leer, the Archdeacon for Mission Development with the Diocese of Athabasca, was here leading a module of the ADTS on Friday evening and Saturday morning. Then Terry led a vestry/council workshop on Saturday evening. On Sunday morning, I headed to Perryvale for a 5th Sunday service. Eric later followed after picking up Arleigh and Vernie. On the way to Perryvale the car connected with a deer. Everyone, except for the deer, is fine.

Terry's Friday evening and Saturday morning presentation was entitled Life Giving Stewardship. This was a module the parish asked for at the parish annual meeting last January. Seeding, graduations and travel kept many people away. There were only seven people in attendance on Friday evening and five on Saturday. Those numbers included the parish clergy - Bill, Chris and Lesley. Despite the small numbers, I believe we could say we learned a great deal about stewardship and what it is and what it is not. By the end of the sessions we changed the name from stewardship to discipleship.

Saturday evening's vestry/council workshop was another great learning experience. Thank you Florence, Wendy, Bonnie, Shirley, Judy, Joyce, Vernie and Bill for giving up your Saturday evening. I know that a lot of the information was new for some attendees. Those who were not able to attend should be expecting to hear some information that we were perhaps unaware of before Terry presented the material. We discovered a couple things that we didn't know and a couple things we are not doing properly.

At the end of the service on Sunday, I made an announcement that those who were not in attendance will read here for the first time. **I will be leaving my position as the priest in charge of the Parish of the Northern Lights effective August 31st. I have accepted a position as priest at the parish of St. Mary Magdalene at Fort Nelson, BC in the Diocese of Yukon. My last service in this parish will be July 31st - which is a fifth Sunday in Colinton. I will take my holidays for the month of August.**

There may be many different responses to this news; sadness, anger, disbelief, gladness or joy. Please know that I am going because it is time. We have been through much together and there has been much growth for all of us. This was my choice to apply for this position and to accept the offer of employment. I simply believe that it is right at this time both for me and for this parish.

Although I did not hear Archdeacon Leer's sermon on Sunday, I did have a chance to read through it on Saturday when I printed it off for him. His message reiterated, and added to, his message of discipleship in a slightly different way. I share part of that message with you here. In this parish, generous and abundant living will look like this:

First of all, you will cease, as of this moment, thinking of your own congregation as the centre of the parish. We do not have four parishes with one rector: we have one rector with four branch offices. You will no longer identify yourselves as St. Paul's this or St. Andrew's/Zion that, but as full sisters and brothers of the Lord in one family called the Parish of the Northern Lights. You will, from now on, sacrifice individual needs to extend a helping hand—including your material resources—to your siblings in the faith and to the diocese or synod beyond. Having received generous acceptance from God, you will now in gratitude extend that same acceptance to the whole parish. This is a necessary expression of generous life in this parish. Secondly, generous and abundant living will also mean that you will generously accept and welcome the civil communities in which you live. You will have to get to know them and love them, even when they are unemployed or intoxicated or unwashed. Each of your congregations will become known as the family of God where the outside is genuinely welcome to explore who God is in the midst of faith. The unwed mother or the unwashed vagrant will be welcomed as your neighbour in the pew. You will gladly surrender your traditional seat to that mentally ill and homeless person who wanders in. You will accept your neighbour's need to question God and suffer with him in looking for the answers. Your own cliques and family groups will be intentionally opened to invite others to join in. Genuine and authentic hospitality that creates space for the newcomer will be the hallmark that identifies the Parish of the Northern Lights. Lastly, generous and abundant life overflowing with gratitude will be proven and demonstrated in your love for one another. Love creates the moral, spiritual, intellectual and emotional space in which others may flourish. People will become more the individuals God intends when our love shelters them. By definition love is generous and abundant. By God's own example love is generous and abundant. "[Love] bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things." In such a climate discipleship and disciples will thrive and generosity will flow. Generous and abundant love will overcome hurt, manipulation and the search for power. Generous love empowers disciples. Genuine love encourages everyone. Love creates, forms and motivates disciples.

I included this because of my love for this parish and my prayer that you will be one as Jesus and his father are one. What I hope I have pushed is that you be ONE parish, whose members are focused more on "being" the church instead of "going" to church.

This parish is Blessed Beyond Measure with love that is more than you can ask or imagine. Please share that love with the world around you as you grow in grace. My life has been made richer because of you. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

With love;
Lesley+

THE BLACK DOT

One day, a professor entered the classroom and asked his students to prepare for a surprise test. They all waited anxiously at their desks for the exam to begin.

The professor handed out the exams with the text facing down, as usual. Once he handed them all out, he asked the students to turn over the papers.

To everyone's surprise, there were no questions – just a black dot in the centre of the sheet of paper.

The professor, seeing the expression on everyone's faces, told them the following:

“I want you to write about what you see there.” The students, confused, got started on the inexplicable task.

At the end of the class, the professor took all the exams, and started reading each one of them aloud in front of the students.

All of them, with no exception, defined the black dot, trying to explain its position in the centre of the sheet.

After all had been read, the classroom silent, the professor started to explain:

“I'm not going to grade you on this; I just wanted to give you something to think about. No one wrote about the white part of the paper. Everyone focused on the black dot and the same happens in our lives. We have a white piece of paper to observe and enjoy, but we always focus on the dark spot. Our life is a gift given to us by God, with love and care, and we always have reasons to celebrate – nature renewing itself every day, our friends around us, the job that provides our livelihood, the miracles we see every day however, we insist on focusing only on the dark spot – the health issue that bothers us, the lack of money, the complicated relationship with a family member, the disappointment with a friend.

The dark spots are very small when compared to everything we have in our lives, but they're the ones that pollute our mind.

Take your eyes away from the black dots in your life. Enjoy each one of your blessings, each moment that life gives you. Be happy and live a life filled with love.”



The \$100 and \$1

Two well-worn bills arrived at the Federal Reserve Bank to be retired – a \$100 and a \$1.

As they traveled down the conveyor belt, they struck up a conversation. The hundred reminisced about the interesting life he had, traveling all over the country. "I've been to the finest restaurants, Broadway shows, Las Vegas, and amusement parks," he said. "I even want on a Caribbean cruise once. Where have you been?"

"Oh," said the one dollar bill, "I've been to a Methodist church, an Anglican church, a Baptist church, and a Lutheran church."

"What's a church?" asked the hundred.

Happy Father's Day



*God took the strength of a mountain,
The majesty of a tree,
The warmth of a summer sun,
The calm of a quiet sea,
The generous soul of nature,
The comforting arm of night,
The wisdom of the ages,
The power of the eagle's flight,
The joy of a morning in spring,
The faith of a mustard seed,
The patience of eternity,
The depth of a family need,
Then God combined these qualities,
When there was nothing more to add,
He knew His masterpiece was complete,
And so, He called it... "DAD"*

Just Like His Dad

“Well, what are you going to be, my boy, when you have reached manhood’s years:

A doctor, a lawyer, or actor great, moving throngs to laughter and tears?”

But he shook his head, as he gave reply, in a serious way he had:

“I don’t think I’d care to be any of them: I want to be like my dad.”

He wants to be like his dad! You men, did you ever think, as you pause,

That the boy who watches your every move, is building a set of laws?

He’s molding a life you’re the model for, and whether it’s good or bad,

Depends on the kind of example set to the boy who’d be like his dad.

Would you have him go everywhere you go? Have him do just the things you do?

And see everything that your eyes behold and woo all the gods you woo?

When you see the worship that shines in the eyes of your lovable little lad,

Could you rest content if he gets his wish and grows up to be like his dad?

BIBLE TRIVIA CHALLENGE

(ANSWERS ON THE BACK PAGE)

1. What problem was the brave army commander Naaman healed of?
 - a) Blindness
 - b) Leprosy
 - c) Fever
 - d) A hunched back

2. At what site did the Lord confound the language of the earth?

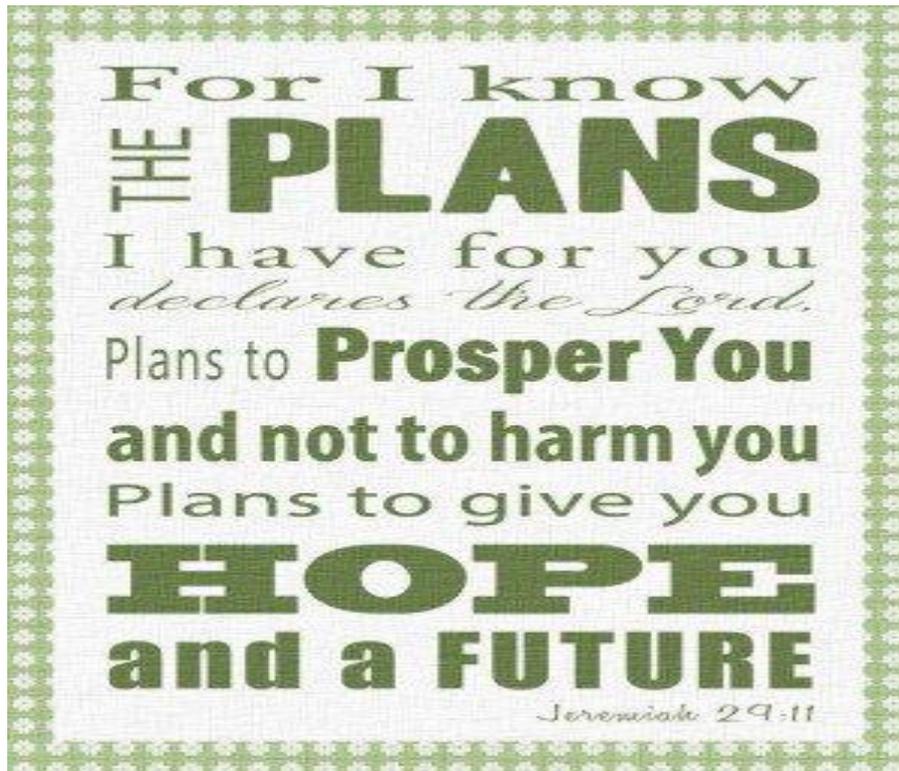
3. What angel announced the birth of Jesus to His mother, Mary?

4. Job’s children were killed by:
 - a) Assyrians
 - b) fire
 - c) wind
 - d) hail

5. What sea, according to the book of Hebrews, was crossed by Israelites, by faith, “as by dry land”?



- June 4th ~ Garden & Greens Sale & BBQ St Andrew's Church Colinton 9 am to 1 pm
Perennials, house plants, garden plants, planters, paving stones, all things green!
Sponsored by St Andrew's Zion Church Colinton & St Thomas Church Perryvale
- June 18th ~ Father's Day Dinner Perryvale Community Centre ... 5 pm to 7 pm
Adults \$12.00; Young Adults 7 – 12 years \$8.00; Under 6 years Free
Sponsored by St Thomas Church Perryvale & St Andrew's Zion Church Colinton
- June 24th – Parish Social – hosted by and at, St Paul's, Boyle – 5:00 pm
Please bring your lawn chair and any musical instrument you would like to play.
Supper provided.



Answers to Bible Trivia::

1. b (2 Kings 5:1, 14)
2. Babel (Genesis 11:9)
3. Gabriel (Luke 1:26-31)
4. c (Job 1:1, 18-19)
5. The Red Sea (Hebrews 11:29 KJV)