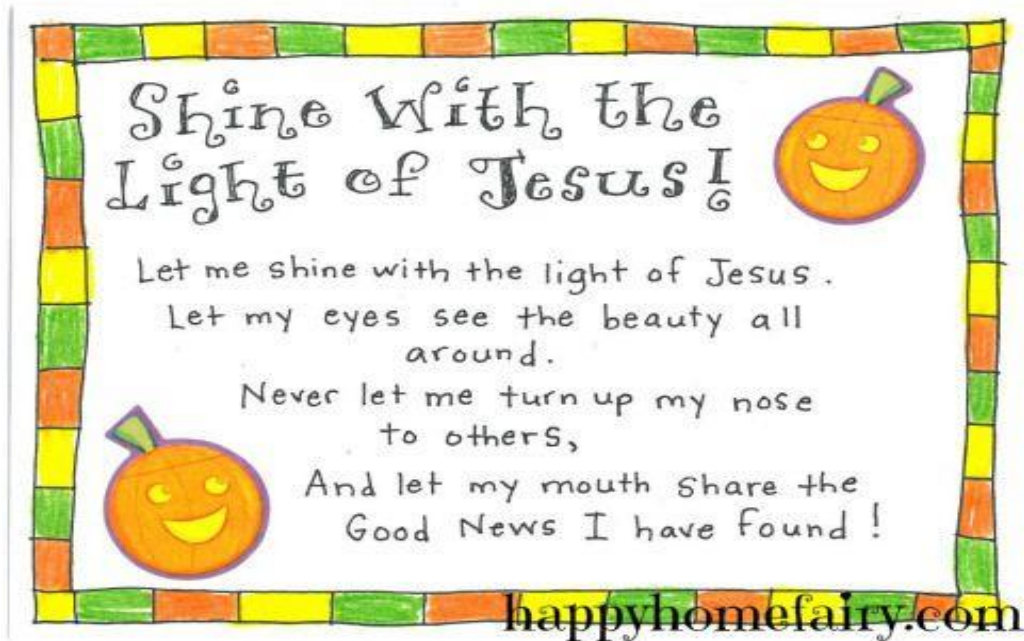


The Parish Light

The Parish of the Northern Lights Newsletter ~ October 2019



Count them One By One

Perhaps we have not counted all our blessings one by one;
Perhaps we have not bothered to remember whence they come;
And maybe we have taken just for granted all the things
That the good Lord has created and the gifts that nature brings:
The autumn hills in glory robed, a golden field of grain,
A sunset's dazzling splendor or the Milky Way's great plain,
The starry sky's sublimity, the ocean's mighty power,
The wonder of creation in the petal of a flower.
And so if we have failed to show by word or act or deed
That we are thankful unto Him who fills our daily need,
May this day show we are grateful when we add up all the sum
Of the blessings we remember, as we count them one by one.

..... Author unknown

**Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, the one who walks by our side
never leaving us.**

When Bishop Lawton on hearing of my retirement called me and asked if I would go to Boyle for a year, I was not sure what to think. I was retiring. True I was not going to leave ministry. Not sure I could if I wanted to. But a year in fulltime ministry was not what I expected. Then again, God seem to call me often to where I was not expecting to go. Who would have thought that a boy who grew up in the slums of Toronto would end up living in the NWT, Nunavut, and the Yukon for 43 years? I would never have thought it could happen, but it did. To top it off He made me a bishop for the last 20 years. All I can say is God has a sense of humour.

After prayer and talking things over with my wife, and 2000 kilometers of driving, here we are, Interim Rector of the Parish of Northern Lights. I have had the chance to have services in all four congregations and Sheila and I have felt a sense of welcome and a wanting to move forward in serving our Lord. For my part I am at peace with the move and look forward to parish ministry again.

The rectory is one of the best I have lived in, even if it is a little big for 2 people. We look forward to settling in.

Over the next few months many can expect a phone call desiring a visit to your home. I know of no better place to get to know a family than in their home. An invitation before the phone call would also be welcomed. I look forward to getting to know you and to discuss where God may be leading the parish and what is needed in the parish to help it grow.

I do not pretend to have a lot of answers. But 43 years in ministry has allowed me to experience much that I hope I can share with you. It is together in prayer praise and planning that we will learn what the needs of this parish are, what contribution I might be able to give and what God's plans might be for this parish.

Sheila and I are honoured to be here, and we seek to be part of your family. Let us love, laugh and yes sometimes cry and mourn together as a family and let us work together seeking God's will for the Parish of Northern Lights.

Blessing in Christ's Love

Bishop Larry Robertson

Interim Rector.

The Teacup Story

There was a couple that used to go to England to shop in beautiful stores. They both liked antiques and pottery, especially teacups.

This was their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary. One day in a beautiful shop they saw an exquisite teacup. They asked the clerk, "May we see that? We've never seen one quite so lovely."

As the lady handed it to them, suddenly the teacup spoke.

'You don't understand,' it said. 'I haven't always been a teacup. There was a time when I was red, and I was clay. My master took me and rolled me and patted me over and over, and I yelled out, 'Let me alone,' but, He only smiled and said, "Not yet." Then I was placed on a spinning wheel and suddenly spun around, and around, and around. 'Stop it! I'm getting dizzy', I screamed'. But the Master only nodded and said, "Not yet." Then he put me in the oven. I never felt such heat. I wondered why he wanted to burn me, and I yelled and knocked on the door. I could see him through the opening, and I could read his lips, as he shook his head, "Not yet."

Finally the door opened, he put me on a shelf, and I began to cool. 'There, that's better,' I said. And he brushed and painted me all over. The fumes were horrible. I thought I would gag. 'Stop it, stop it!' I cried. He only nodded, "Not yet." Then suddenly he put me back into the oven, not like the first one. This was twice as hot, and I knew I would suffocate. I begged. I pleaded. I screamed. I cried. I could see him through the opening nodding his head, saying, "Not yet."

Then I know there wasn't any hope. I would never make it. I was ready to give up. But the door opened, and he took me out and placed me on a shelf. One hour later, He handed me a mirror and said, "Look at yourself." And I did. I said, 'That's not me, that couldn't be me, It's beautiful, I'm beautiful.'

"I want you to remember", then He said, "I know it hurts to be rolled and patted, but if I had left you alone, you'd have dried up. I know it made you dizzy to spin around on the wheel, but if I had stopped, you would have crumbled. I knew it hurt and was hot and disagreeable in the oven, but if I hadn't put you there, you would have cracked.

I know the fumes were bad when I brushed and painted you all over, but if I hadn't done that, you never would have hardened; you would not have held.

Now you are a finished product. You are what I had in mind when I first began you."

MORAL; God knows what He is doing for all of us. He is the Potter, and we are His clay. He will mold us and make us, so that we may be made into a flawless piece of work to fulfill His good, pleasing and perfect will.





"The Lord isn't asking us to load up a handcart. He's asking us to fortify our faith. He isn't asking us to walk across a continent, He's asking us to walk across the street to visit our neighbor. He isn't asking us to give all of our worldly possessions to build a temple. He's asking us to attend regularly the temples already built. He isn't asking us to die a martyr's death, He's asking us to live a disciple's life."

- Elder M. Russell Ballard



Mission in Corozal, Belize

January 25 – February 9, 2020

1 week mission at

St Pauls by the Sea Anglican School

1 Week holiday – place to be decided by group.

All costs to be paid by individual

For more information contact

Bishop Larry Robertson

780-213-4099 or yukonbis@icloud.com

Serve God and have a Holiday



THANKFULNESS

When Mrs. Klein told her first graders to draw a picture of something for which they were thankful, she thought what little these children, who lived in a deteriorating neighborhood, actually had to be thankful for. She knew that most of the class would draw pictures of turkeys or of bountifully laden Thanksgiving tables. That was what they believed was expected of them.

What took Mrs. Klein aback was Douglas's picture. Douglas was so forlorn and likely to be found close in her shadow as they went outside for recess. Douglas's drawing was simply this:

A hand, obviously, but whose hand? The class was captivated by his image. "I think it must be the hand of God that brings us food," said one student.

"A farmer," said another, "because they grow the turkeys."

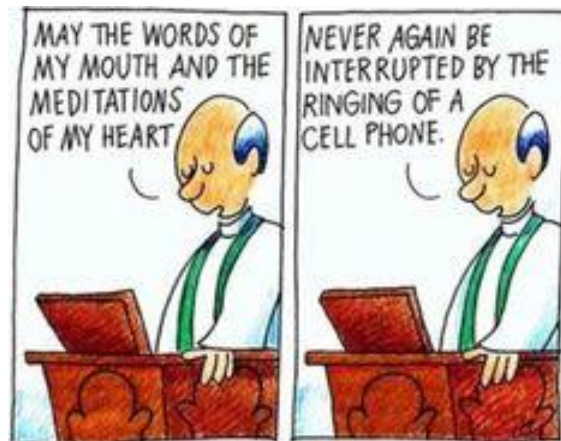
"It looks more like a policeman, and they protect us." "I think," said Lavinia, who was always so serious, "that it is supposed to be all the hands that help us, but Douglas could only draw one of them."

Mrs. Klein had almost forgotten Douglas in her pleasure at finding the class so responsive. When she had the others at work on another project, she bent over his desk and asked whose hand it was.

Douglas mumbled, "It's yours, Teacher."

Then Mrs. Klein recalled that she had taken Douglas by the hand from time to time; she often did that with the children. But that it should have meant so much to Douglas ...

Perhaps, she reflected, this was her Thanksgiving, and everybody's Thanksgiving—not the material things given unto us, but the small ways that we give something to others.



The Non-newcomer

In or out? With me or not? Belong or not? We often use this terminology when referring to church membership. However, I am concerned with this way of thinking. It creates an “us” versus “them” mentality.

Sure there is a need for some kind of governance piece about membership and fulfilling the obligations of the Societies Act. I get that. But I am talking about how we practice hospitality to all people – not just newcomers. How can church be a welcoming community for all people?

For instance, how do you welcome the ‘non-newcomer’ (Yes, I made up that word). I think ‘non-newcomers’ describe those people who have been part of a congregation but have then spent some time away from it.

The reasons for someone leaving a congregation are numerous. Sometimes work gets in the way; there might be weekend sporting events, especially for children. Sometimes a person just isn’t interested in attending church anymore; sometimes there is frustration with the way things are being done. The list could go on.

While it is important to try to make a pastoral connection with someone who has stepped aside we also need to recognize that there may come a point in time when that person wishes to disconnect for a while. But we also hope and pray that the time will come when they will want to re-connect. What then? How will you handle that when it happens?

I have heard some horror stories over the years of ‘non-newcomers’ going back to church after significant absences. “Where have you been?” someone snidely asks. Or, “I haven’t seen you for a while”

How does that make the person feel? Guilty? Ashamed? It is not exactly a very hospitable greeting of welcome. Far better to say, “Hey, it’s great to see you again. How are you keeping?”

For those who go through a period in their lives where they have stepped back from involvement – for whatever reason – it can be extremely hard to start attending church once again. While we might always state that we would love it if people started attending again, we often send signals, either overtly or inadvertently, that they really are not fully welcomed back until they prove themselves.

In your congregation, how easily can people move from one circle to another circle? Think of people’s engagement in terms of concentric circles rippling outwards. There are those actively involved, helping out in a myriad of things. Next are those who are fairly regular attenders, participating in some activities. The next ring out might be those who attend periodically, participating in the occasional event.

The ring beyond that might be those who attend at Christmas, ask about getting their children baptized, and maybe help out with the garage sale. The ring furthest out may be those you see once in a long while, but whom you might run into at the grocery store or some community event. They, too, are deserving of gracious hospitality and care.

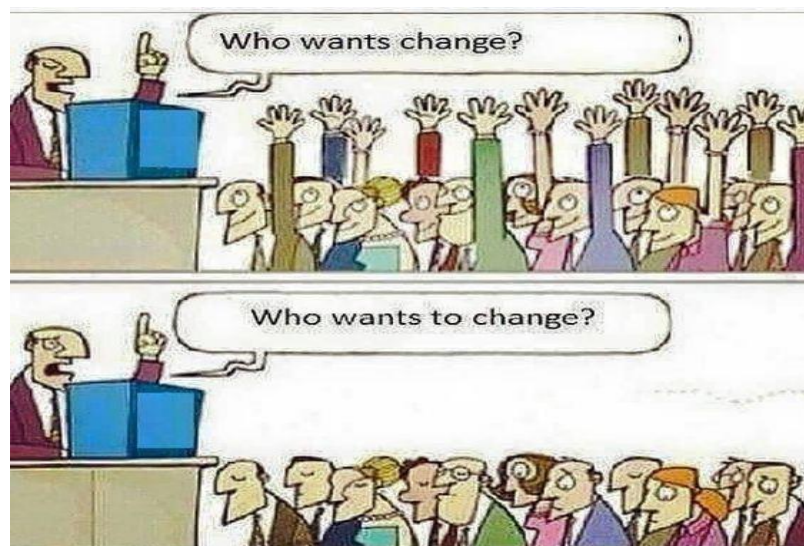
People actively involved in church often lament, “20% of us do 80% of the work around here!” There are feelings of exasperation and frustration, wondering why nobody steps up to help. How do we move beyond this 20-80 dynamic? How do we allow people the freedom to attend and participate on THEIR schedule and

desire, and not on OUR expectation or how they should behave or participate? How do we create a church atmosphere that is welcoming of all, regardless of their degree of participation?

Work at keeping fluidity between the different circles. Depending on life's challenges and things that happen, people will move from greater to lesser involvement, from lesser to greater involvement. Our grace-filled task is to make sure people can participate at whatever level they would like.

Those of us who are actively involved in church can easily "over-function". Instead, how do we graciously provide space and encouragement for others to share in the work? Always lift up people's gifts. Provide opportunity. "Hey, I was wondering if you would consider...." This is offering hospitality as much as anything else. Develop a culture of participation with an acceptance that not everything may get done.

.....Bishop Gregory Mohn, British Columbia Synod, Canada Lutheran publication



Bishop Larry Robertson, Interim Minister
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Rev. Bill Creaser, Deacon
780-213-0094

LeRoy and I would like to sincerely thank all our Prayer Warriors, All who Prayed for LeRoy and All who visited us while we were in Edmonton. LeRoy has now returned to the hospital in Athabasca.
God bless you all ~ Jan Overacker