

# THE PARISH LIGHT

The Parish of the Northern Lights Newsletter

September 2020



## The Season of Autumn

The season of Autumn  
Produces a display,  
Of awesome-filled color  
That only God could portray.  
For in His presentation  
Of hues in multi-color,  
We see the glorious beauty  
He creates like no other.

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## Changing Can Look Similar

This week is my last as your Interim Rector. But I am not going anywhere. I am around for the next year or so. But not everything will be the same. My title will no longer have Interim before it. I do not really think this makes a difference but the Diocese will drop it and I guess so should we. Other than that I will still be the Priest in Charge of this Parish.

There will be some changes as follows:

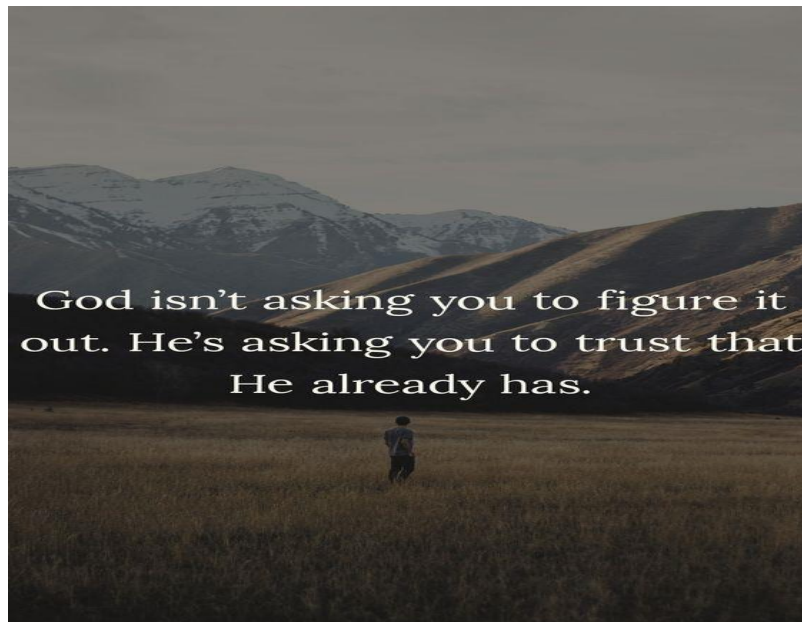
**Our family will grow.** We will no longer be just one parish, but three parishes working together. Three parishes but one Family. This sort of sounds like the Trinity. So if it seems hard to get your head around it, that is because it is new and there are not any real patterns to follow in this diocese. We are developing the patterns as we go. Someone said to me that maybe we should wait until we got it figured out. That might seem nice, but I have been trying to figure out the Trinity for almost fifty years and still am confused at how the details work. I have learned to accept the teaching on the bases of Scripture and to live in the benefits of the Trinity. I do not have to understand to believe.

It is similar with this Trinity of Parishes. We do not have the time or luxury to wait to figure it out. Necessity brings us together, so we will work it out as we go. I would also remind you that as four congregations in one parish there have been many developments as we grow. We did not wait until it was all worked out to come together.

**A second change is that our Leadership Team will grow.** In this new Trinity of Parishes we will have one new fulltime Associate Priest, the Rev. Rose Howell. She will work with me to plan and ensure there is pastoral care for all three parishes. We will also have two new retired priests, The Rev. Terry Frances and The Rev. Christobel Lines. These, along with our deacon The Rev. Bill Creaser, our lay readers and the lay readers from the other parishes will make up our Leadership Team. As time goes, this leadership team will grow or shine as training takes place or people move away. On the whole there will be little visible change. Services will continue as normal. Each parish will meet and plan for their parish. They will still have their own local commitments and commitments to the Diocese. The two salaries and ministry costs will be shared by the three parishes with help from the Diocese.

The big advantage is that we will have a larger pool of resources when we begin to think of training and outreach possibilities as well as in the liturgy of our services. To be honest, we are brought together because of our lack of financial resources. The success or failure of this Trinity of Parishes will depend on how we are willing to work together and support each other. If we do not work together, we will fail. But I believe that if we come together in Christ, supporting each other as the family of God, then we can and will grow and become an example of what God can do when his people cooperate. Together we stand, together we will move forward in the light of God.

Bishop Larry Robertson.



***Heavenly Father, thank you for being the God of not only balance, but of change. Help us to understand how to use both with mercy and acceptance in a new way.***

# Crosses Half Price

Many years ago I was waiting for a street car in Toronto. It was a cold winter's day. The wind blew right through me. I turned away from the street and the wind and stood facing the jewelry store in front of the street car stop. A sale was going on in the store. There were earrings and necklaces on sale. One sign that caught my eye was a sale sign that said "Crosses Half Price"

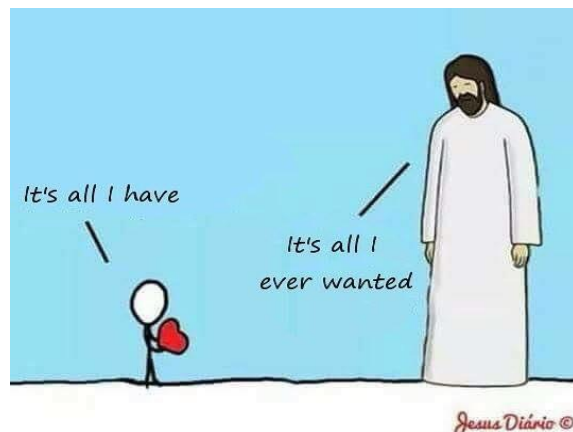
At the time it struck me that that is what I was looking for in my faith, a cheap cross. I wanted what Jesus had to offer, but I did not want to pay the full price for it. We like our crosses prettied up. We shine them and put gems in them, make them of God so that looks attractive to the world.

But the real cross was not pretty. It was wooden and a symbol of horror. A symbol of death. When Jesus died on the Cross he transformed it into a symbol of love and self-sacrifice. Nevertheless, it remained a symbol of Death. Jesus said **"If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me"** (Matthew 16:24) In other words he is saying that if you wish to follow me you must die to yourself. Your plans for your future must be replaced with God's plan for you. These may not be very different than what your current plans are, but the goals will be. Or they may be radically different. In either case, your goals become service to Jesus as he defines it. Your goal will be to honour Him in all you do.

I do not know what God has in store for you, but what I do know that in following Jesus, there is life beyond measure. Jesus says in Matthew 16:26 **"those who lose their life for my sake will find it."** And again in John 10:10, **"I have come that they (followers) may have life and have it to the full".** It begins with Christ's death on the Cross of Calvary. By putting our faith in Jesus Christ and believing that He died on the Cross for us, we die to ourselves. God's goals become our goals. And in giving our lives to his service, where ever we find ourselves, we will find life in the fullest. May we all decide to live life to the fullest be picking up our Cross and carrying it. Life is free to receive, but it isn't cheap. It cost Jesus his life, it will cost you the same.

Blessings

Bishop Larry Robertson



# Lessons of the North

## Leaving Baker Lake

After 8 years as the Anglican priest in Baker Lake, we had to leave because of medical issues with one of our children. Fortunately, we were only out for a year, but we did not know that at the time. All of our things had to be packed and things were to be flown out in a plane.

Our parish and community had just gone through a rather rough year that involved a lot of emotion, both grief and anger. We as a parish were working through this when we found we had to leave. This did not make leaving any easier.

About a week before we left, one of the parish members came to visit. The conversation that took place taught me about how relationships with those you serve are both a burden and a strength. I learned as well lessons on what is healthy and unhealthy when speaking about leaving.

During the conversation, this member said he was no longer going to make friends with the new ministers. This surprised me as we had a close friendship with each other. I asked him why. He, frowning and looking at the floor, said that they keep leaving and it is hard to see family go.

His friendship to me was important as he was always one I could talk to and share my problems with, as well as my joys. We prayed together and hunted together. I was given a new name when many spoke of me. But I was surprised to be included as family.

We talked about how important his friendship was to me over the years and how the next ministers would need friendship and support as well.

This time taught me how the relationships that ministers form in a community have a great effect on the community. It is the same with everyone's relationships. How you handle them effects not only you but those around you. It taught me to value and nurture good relationships. I have tried to be more sensitive in making relationships and in holding them. I have tried also to be sensitive in leaving a parish. I am truly thankful that this is one issue I do not have with the current changes of this parish.

I would encourage all to be sensitive in your relationships because your actions and words will affect more than just you.

Blessings.

Bishop Larry

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***“You may not understand now what I am doing, but someday you will.”***

***John 13:7***

## **Voice of Cherub**

The little boy put on his clothes for the cold and then told his father:

"Ok dad I'm ready"

His Dad, the pastor, said: "Ready for what?"

"Dad, it's time to go outside and distribute our flyers."

Dad replied: "Son, it's very cold outside and it's drizzling."

The child looked surprised at his father and said: "But dad, people need to know about God even on rainy days."

Dad replied, "Son, I'm not going outside in this weather."

With despair, the child said: "Dad, can I go alone? Please!"

His father waited for a moment and then said: "Son, you can go. Here's the flyers, be careful."

"Thank you dad!"

And with this, the son went out into the rain. The 11-Year-old walked all the streets of the village, handing out the flyers to the people he saw.

After 2 hours walking in the rain and in the cold and with his last flyer in his hand, he stopped in a corner to see if he saw someone to give the flyer too, but the streets were totally deserted. Then he turned to the first house he saw, walked to the front door, touched the bell several times and waited, but no one came out.

Finally the boy turned to leave, but something stopped him. The child turned back to the door and began to touch the bell and pound the door strongly with his knuckles. He kept waiting. Finally the door was opened gently.

A lady came out with a very sad look and gently asked:

"What can I do for you, son?"

With radiant eyes and a bright smile the child said:

"Lady, I'm sorry if I upset you, but I just want to tell you that God really loves you and that I came to give you my last flyer, which talks about God and His great love

The boy then gave her the flyer.

She just said, "Thank you, son, God bless you!"

Well, next Sabbath morning, the pastor was in the pulpit and when the service began he asked:

"Someone has a testimony or something they want to share?"

Gently, in the back row of the church, an older lady stood up. When she started talking, a radiant and glorious look sprouted from her eyes:

"Nobody in this church knows me. I have never been here, even last Saturday I was not Christian.

My husband died a while ago leaving me totally alone in this world. Last Saturday was a particularly cold and rainy day, and it was also in my heart; that on that day I came to the end of the road, since I had no hope and didn't want to live anymore.

Then I took a chair and a rope and went up to the attic of my house. I tied one end of the rope to the rafters of the roof; then I climbed onto the chair and put the other end of the rope around my neck.

I then stood on the chair, so alone and heartbroken, I was about to throw myself off the chair, when suddenly I heard the loud sound of the door being knocked.

So I thought: "I'll wait for a minute and whoever it is will go"

I waited and waited, but the door knocking was getting louder and louder every time. It got so loud that I couldn't ignore it anymore.

So I wondered, who could it be?

No one ever comes close to my door or come to visit me!

I released the rope from my neck and went to the door, while the bell was still ringing and the door was still being knocked on.

When I opened the door, I couldn't believe what my eyes saw, in front of my door was the most radiant and angelic child I've ever seen.

He's smile, ohhh, I can never describe it! The words that came out of his mouth made my heart, dead so long ago, come back to life, when he said with the VOICE OF CHERUB: "Lady, I just want to tell you that God really loves you"

"When the little angel disappeared between the cold and the rain, I closed my door and read every word of the flyer.

Then I went to the attic to remove the chair and rope.

I didn't need them anymore. As you see. Now I am a happy daughter of the King.

As the direction of the boy, when he left, was to this church, I came personally say thank you to that little angel of God who came just in time and, in fact, to rescue my life from an eternity in hell. And replaced it with an eternity in God's presence. "

Everyone cried in the church.

The Pastor came down from the pulpit to the first bench of the front, where the little angel was sitting; he took his son in his arms and cried uncontrollably.

Church is not an organization  
you join; it is a family where  
you belong, a home where you  
are loved, and a hospital where  
you find healing.

*Aging Gracefully*

