

News for Scattered Pews

May 2022



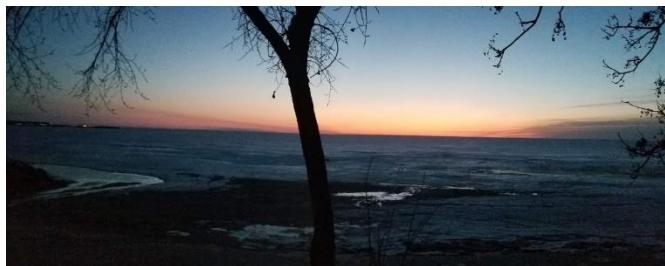
Val's Voice

As I write, we have gone through our 3rd storm in 3 weeks. Some of our neighbours are flooded and we all long for spring. We pray for hope for Ukraine. A couple of weeks ago we learned that Mark McDonald

has acknowledged misconduct and resigned as Indigenous Archbishop. His presence, which for many was a sign of promise and renewal in the Church, has now brought heartbreak to many. (We pray for Interim Bishop Simon Black.)

Any of these could rightly trouble us greatly. All of them coming at the same time (as well as other more personal or family struggles) can seem like too much. There is a sense in which I think that some even feel guilty for small joys that come into our lives, during these days of struggle...

At the same time, we know that spring will come, the sun will return, and the new life promised at Easter is life that comes from the midst of struggle and even violence and death. These days I think perhaps more than ever we all need to take a deep breath and acknowledge the struggle that swirls around us.



I think that these days, even though we think that the struggles of Covid are fading, in a sense they aren't, and the struggles of our world still assault us, perhaps more than they have for decades. I think all of these struggles play havoc with our mental health, with our patience, with our kindness.

In the Gospel this Sunday, after Jesus' death and resurrection, after his meeting with Thomas to

show his wounds and to breathe peace on his disciples, this weekend there is another addition to the story...

Some of Jesus' disciples decide to go fishing. After working all night, their nets are still coming up empty. Jesus points them in the right direction, and their nets are filled... This identifies him to them, but it doesn't seem to be what they need.

After filling their nets, the scene changes to Jesus cooking a breakfast of fish for his exhausted friends on the beach. Even if you haven't eaten breakfast on a beach, perhaps you can imagine the scene: The sun rises. The aroma of frying fish is rich and delicious. The water lapping at the shore is just what their tired feet, tired arms, tired bodies need... All of this comes together.

Jesus' disciples, who are exhausted mentally and physically, are given a meal of bread and fish - a meal that the earliest church used as they celebrated Eucharist! It would have nourished every one of their senses, the way that it is described in John's Gospel.

Today we are also exhausted. So I invite you to imagine this meal, and the way that it nourishes them on that beach, with the beauty of light and smell, the soothing of their physical selves, and also taste... the taste of a meal that our Lord cooked just for his disciples. We are also those people. Christ is also preparing a meal for us... a meal to bring us healing in the ways that we need it the most.

Take it in, know the healing that God offers. And then as much as you are able, in whatever ways you are able, share Christ's love and hospitality with those in your life who may need it for the healing of their spirits! If you are tired don't be hard on yourselves! But do know that God's love and Jesus' care will also uplift your spirit and gradually bring healing to your lives, healing as present as the lapping of the water on the shore of the lake that day.

This we pray not just for ourselves, but for our entire world. Peace and healing to you and yours and to all...

Val

Financial Update

Our parish finances remain a concern. Envelope giving is about \$4,000 behind our budget; and combined with our deficit budget, the annual insurance bill, and a biannual elevator license that came early in the year, Corporation had to make the decision to transfer \$10,000 from our investments in the Integra Fund into our working funds. We are hopeful this will be made up by the end of the year.

If you would like help finding a different way to give your offering, you can call the church at 204-253-0555 and Judy will get back to you and explain the options, which are:

- Automatic monthly bank withdrawals
- E-transfers from your financial institution to stmary@mts.net
- Cheques mailed to the church

And of course you are welcome to bring your offering to church on Sunday - if you feel able it would be great to see you at church! And, as always, thanks so much for your generosity.

Vestry Notes from April 26

Meeting via Zoom, first we shared where in this Easter season we are seeing signs of new life. The responses ranged from the excitement of seeing rhubarb shoots emerging in the garden and seedlings sprouting indoors, to newborn farm animals; from the energy of young children eager to get on with their lives, to possibilities for change with the news of plans for the downtown Bay building; from opportunities to witness to one's faith with friends and family, to the awe and wonder at the birth of a baby born in a cellar during the current war in Ukraine. While there is much distress and death in our situation at present we recognize all of this as part of the 'circle of life':

"We are all connected in the great circle of life, regardless of social or economic status, race, sexuality, ethnicity or religion". Clearly it's time to watch the movie "The Lion King" again!

In-person worship has resumed and the Easter Sunday service was beautiful and well attended. The combination of in-person and online worship is a challenge we continue to try to solve. The technical expertise of volunteers is welcomed.

It was agreed that because of the highly contagious nature of the current strain of the COVID virus, we should continue to mask and practice social distancing when gathering in the church in order to protect ourselves and one another.

A good deal of time was spent considering the balance of 'In-reach and Out-reach' as our community begins to focus on the future. It was decided to open the discussion up to the congregation by holding a meeting after morning worship in the near future.

Committee reports were received, all of them indicating the hard work of so many for the wellbeing of us all.

The meeting closed with the Doxology, which is taken from Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, Chap 3, vs 20-21: *Now to him who is able to accomplish far more than all we ask or imagine, by the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen*

Thanks to Heather for her take on Vestry!

Spring Garage Sale April 29-30

We only had 349 shoppers this time (blame the weather!) but thanks to their spending power and the generosity of the 36 volunteers who did an amazing job putting it all together, we made a very good profit that, while lower than other spring sales, is still a great achievement.

The garage sale is a great way to reconnect, for fellowship, to get to know fellow parishioners, and to build community. Thank you for all who assisted.

Cathy Mondor

The Parish of St. Mary Magdalene is on Treaty 1 territory.

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