



Parish of the Ascension Chimes



March 22, 2020

Lent IV, Mothering Sunday

Weekly Lenten Focus: Reducing Waste and Pollution

Lections: 1 Samuel 16:1-13; Psalm 23 (*Refrain: The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.*); Ephesians 5:8-14; John 9:1-41

Hymns: Wash, O God, our Sons & Daughters; Praise the One who Breaks the Darkness; Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life; God, whose Almighty Word (**see attachment for full hymns**).

Updates: Please check the following websites for regular updates on information related to the COVID 19 pandemic:

www.parishoftheascension.ca

<https://anglicanenl.net/home/> (You will find the most recent weekly letter from our Bishop under Our Bishop- Bishop's Writings.)

<https://www.mountpearl.ca/>

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>

Church Services and Public Gatherings Cancelled: In compliance with a directive from the diocese, as well as public health, all services and public gatherings have been cancelled at the Parish of the Ascension until further notice. As a result, 'Opening Doors in Lent' has been cancelled and the Annual General Meeting has been rescheduled. We will provide further information as it becomes available.

Blessing Bags: If you have items purchased for the Blessing Bags, you may drop them off at the parish. Please ring the bell at the side entrance between the hours of 9 a.m. – 12 noon, Monday to Friday. The door will be unlocked and you may deposit your Blessing Bag in the bin provided inside the door. Thank you.

Outreach: This is a time for our faith community to come together to uplift each other. Please don't forget to regularly check on your family, friends and neighbours. If you are in need of pastoral contact, or if you know of anyone who is struggling at this stressful time, please let one of the clergy know.



Food First NL: Food First NL works with communities in Newfoundland & Labrador to ensure everyone has access to affordable, healthy, and culturally appropriate food. Please visit their website at <http://www.foodfirstnl.ca/covid19> to find updates to NL Community Food Programs.



Weekly Word:

Nothing seems to be the way that it was, these days. In conversation at home, in the workplace and in the community, whether between family, friends, coworkers, strangers, everything is different. I have had many conversations that orbit around the theme of this being a defining point in history, and in the interaction and interrelation of people in the world.

Nothing is the way that it was, and for many there are heightened states of stress, anxiety, fear and exhaustion. With this comes the challenge of the unknown that is before us, and what supports or foundations we have to hold on to as individuals and as communities in the time to come.

In many senses, everything is lost. The global community and the local community are making sweeping changes, and being affected in ways that we cannot completely comprehend. It is as if all that we know about how we conduct our lives and our work is being turned upside down.

This is present in all aspects of our daily life and experience.

On my desk I have a treasured token, that I got in Bar Harbor, Maine when I was sixteen, and sailing with a schooner for the summer. It is a child's top. It is small and plain, and not really much to look at.

However, when it is spun, it can turn completely upside down, while still spinning. For me it is a symbol and a reminder that there are things that may cause us to completely transform who we are and how we live.

In the Scripture this past week, the readings from John have shared stories uncertainty transformation. Last week the Samaritan woman's life is transformed by an encounter with Jesus, and this week a man born blind is healed of blindness. In each of these situations, their lives are turned upside down because of their encounter with the Holy One.

These past days our lives have been turned upside down. In this turning and transformation, I believe the Holy One has been present, and will continue to be present. We will find alternate ways to spin through our lives and our responsibilities, even if it involves standing on our heads!

The Holy One is surrounding us, and encourages us to be the face and presence of the Holy to all in our care. As we navigate through our days, I ask that we please be mindful of those around us. Be caring and compassionate, be present to listen and respond, be there to help, through the various ways (telephoning, social media check-ins, etc.) so that all can move through this transformation of practice, pattern, and culture, to a new reality.

This new reality will be a reality based in the love and care of Friend and Stranger, Neighbour and Family. May we hold this, even in the midst of anxiety, fear, and unknowing.

Peace,
David

Donations to Ministry: If you are interested in continuing to donate to the parish ministry during the COVID-19 pandemic, there are a variety of ways for you to do so.

- **Church Envelopes:** You may still use your envelopes during this time. You may drop them in the mailbox at the main entrance of the church or you can put your givings in the mail.
- **Pre-authorized Givings:** You can have your givings automatically deducted on a schedule that works for you. If you are interested in setting up pre-authorized givings, please contact the church office at 368-5693.
- **Canada Helps:** You can sign up to make donations to Canada Helps through our parish website.



Food Bank Donations: The need for food donations is still great. If you are able to donate to the food bank, we ask that you drop your donation directly to St. Vincent de Paul Food Bank at either St. Peter's Parish Hall on Ashford Drive or Mary Queen of the World on Topsail Road. All donations are gratefully appreciated.



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"I am the light of the world, says the Lord; those who follow me will have the light of life" John 8.12
