

Coop's Scoops #130, Tuesday November 24, 2020



This morning was another “aha” moment for me. I was getting into the car to come to work when I glanced at the lake and saw the snow trees reflecting in the not yet frozen water. Had to scamper down and take this

picture. It’s a one of a kind...usually I take pics of autumn leaves on water, and usually in the winter there are no reflections on the ice. So it is not my “usual” beautiful picture, it is a totally different way to see the landscape and it too is beautiful. Different is not always “unwelcome”. The usual is not always “best”.

We all know that Christmas this year won’t have the same pictures and experiences as last year, or the year before and so on. It will be different. Fewer or no family members. No carol singing in the Church. No visiting homes of friends with gifts of food or wine just ourselves. And yet Christmas will still be beautiful. It will still be wonderful. Because Christmas is Saviour’s Day. The day we remember something else we don’t actually see anymore.....a feeding trough in a barn with a baby tucked in and a mom and dad far away from their families, with no parents or grands or aunties or uncles or brothers and sisters....all alone in a strange place receiving the best gift ever. A baby. Every baby is a gift. But their Baby was also the Son of God, Yeshua Jesus... come as the gift of God to a world in crisis, an occupied land, enduring a forced census by Rome.

Remember that Elizabeth’s and John’s baby was also a gift from God, to be the fore-runner for Jesus. Elizabeth had her family with her for the birthing, even

Mary from Nazareth was there, watching and learning intently about how to birth her coming child. They had very different landscapes. And they were both absolutely beautiful.

I encourage myself and all of us to start to plan ways to make Christmas joyful and special and full of love in new ways this year.... Joined at heart though not at hand or hip. Any great ideas? Please send them along.

News!

First a prayer request. Jo Nickason's great-granddaughter Scarlett Rose, a beautiful, fun-loving 18 month old darling, has been diagnosed with cancer; a tumour in her stomach. Jo and Ed have asked for our prayers. And we will pray. Many already are praying. Could you also please send Jo a note or make a call from time to time just to assure her of your love and prayerful concern? Scarlett Rose's treatment will take about 8 months, with her parents having to leave Brighton, where they live, to be in Kingston at the hospital all this week and into next. Today is Scarlett's first day of chemo. Thank you for doing this! I have spoken with Jo and she is full of hope and faith in God yet also just overwhelmed that this could happen to her adorable and much loved little one.

"Bless Scarlett Rose this day, O Lord, and all who care for her; bless her parents and her brother and her whole family, remembering Jo and Ed as well. We ask that she be restored to full health and strength through the agency of amazing skilled medical people and through the work of your Holy Spirit, in the name of Christ we pray. Amen"

I ask your continuing prayers also for Noni and for Marg and for all who suffer from illness in body, spirit, mind and soul. May hope and peace arise in every crevice.

Second:

Please continue to pray for the Concurrence Committee. They are working hard to assess applicants and praying much for wisdom as they select a new Priest for our churches. Please pray by name.... Peter, Connie, Steve, Jacquie, Karen, and chairperson John. Thanks!

Third: Please remember Jane Lever and her family as there will be a service of interment at St. Thomas cemetery for Jim on Sunday, Nov 29thfamily only in attendance, but so many friends, including us, there in heart. A life well-lived and a man well-loved!

Your Smile!

- **My friend says to me: "What rhymes with orange" I said: "no it doesn't"**
- **So what if I don't know what Armageddon means? It's not the end of the world.**
- **Before your criticize someone, walk a mile in their shoes. That way, when you do criticize them, you're a mile away and have their shoes.**

Those are groaners, but pretty good ones....I'll do better next time. Got any to share?

Scripture for Today: Isaiah 61: 1-4

61 The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners;

² to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn;

³ to provide for those who mourn in Zion— to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, to display his glory.

⁴ They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.



Homily: What better way to begin the season of Advent than using the words of the prophet Isaiah that Jesus Himself read in the Temple to announce His coming

and the beginning of His ministry. The promise of the Prophet come true...in their hearing. Right then and there.

We are, I think, much wanting and hoping for “deliverance” ourselves. Longing for the days that will “follow” the intensity of the pandemic we are living through. Longing for friends and family at our dinner tables, longing to go “out” to theater, or to the gym, or for dining....the Swiss Chalet Christmas Special tastes a lot better with a table of 12 laughing and enjoying time together. Advent is the season of “waiting” of “longing” for the coming of Christ and for the fulfillment of God’s plan from the foundations of time to make all things new in a new heaven and a new earth. Advent tells us it is “coming” and then Christmas assures “It has begun....God here among us, God in the midst of us, bringing us to light and life through the nativity of His Son, Jesus, the Christ...the anointed One, the Messiah.

So we are waiting, and we are “longing” for what is to come. How do we do that? Do we fidget with details and tasks and toys to keep our minds off the fact that we are waiting? Do we wait in gloom or fear like someone expecting bad news? Do we try to distract ourselves in multilayered ways? Sometimes.

There is a wonderful Greek word that is about waiting. The word is “prodechomai”. It means waiting, leaning into the wind, standing on tiptoe trying to see around the corner. .. it means waiting “expectantly”. Much as a mother waits for a child to be born. Just like Mary.

How we wait depends a lot on our experience. Picture a child who waits without any hope for a friend or a parent to “find” him....without hope because no one’s looked for him before... without hope because even if he gets “found” life won’t have much happiness or love in it for him. That child is not “looking” for anyone, eyes downcast, shoulders slumped, just waiting. Contrast that with a child who’s waiting because he got lost, and he knows that his mom and dad are searching for him, and he knows they’ll never give up, never do anything else until they do find him, and then they’ll laugh and go for hot chocolate and life will be wonderful...that child waits with hope and expectancy, searching for the sight of a parent who’s eyes will shine with joy and with happy tears because they have found their child. Which child do you relate to? Know, dear one, that Jesus came to seek you out, and find you, and love you forever.

Perhaps that is how we are to wait! Knowing that our loving Father, and our Brother Jesus, and our companion the Holy Spirit will never give up until they bring us safely home; never abandon us; never leave us without love; and give us

peace beyond our comprehension. “ Prodechomai” waiting is my prayer for all of us. And if we find at times we find we just can’t “lean” into the wind, let’s “lean” unto each other. Have each other’s backs and hands. It makes all the difference.

-Judie+

Hymn Prayer for Advent: # 572 Let There Be Light

**“Let There be Light, Let there be understanding
Let all the nations gather, Let them be face to face.**

**Perish the sword, Perish the angry judgement
Perish the bombs and hunger, Perish the fight for gain.**

**Let there be Light, Open our hearts to wonder;
Perish the way of terror, Hallow the world God made.”**

This is our longing, O Lord our God. You have sprinkled our lives with hope and with glimpses of glory to sustain us. We thank You, and we pledge ourselves to wait, not as others wait who have no hope, but with confidence in Your goodness and Your love which never fails. Amen.

Blessing:

Be steadfast in faith, joyful in hope, and untiring in love all the days of your life; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always!

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord!

Judie+