

## Coop's Scoops #80 ( YUP 80!) July 10, 2020

If I think of the number of Scoops as years, Scoops is now much older than I am! I am grateful for this new form of ministry and the way God is working in our lives throughout this Covid 19 pandemic. So glad to be a small part of your lives each day!

Travel plans have been very much on hold for many people. We think of our



American friends who long to arrive to their cottages for the summer. We think of family trips cancelled, new babies not yet visited, not being able to drive through Manitoba to get to BC, not ready to fly yet, if ever.... Every one of these situations is affecting parishioners in our congregations.

Perhaps some consolation is that we already LIVE in the part of Ontario where MOST people long to visit.

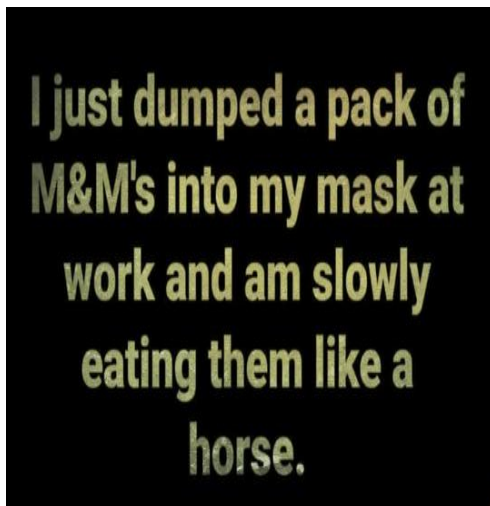
We can find a lake and jump in. Take a walk on a wooded

trail. Meet outdoors with some friends. Wear a mask with your chin held high.

If you are having to isolate or not able to get outside, keep some cold cloths for your forehead nearby and some ice cold lemonade on hand. Grab a print or talking book. Go through old photos. There are many simple things we can do to make life enjoyable while not being exactly to our liking! That's the pep talk for today. If it falls sadly on your ears, because you are unable to do these things, please know we weep with you, and want to help if we can. Let me know!

## **News from the Churches:**

There are a number of friends from St. Thomas who are meeting near the covered bandshell in the park on Manitoba across from the Church every Wednesday (weather permitting) between 11:30-12:00. They spend about an hour talking and having lunch. Bring a lawn chair and something for yourself (only) to eat and drink. Wear a mask if you feel you should; they are not mandatory outside, but may still be helpful. Eating is a bit tricky, but here's the solution:



fun and be safe!

All chairs will be socially distanced. Even if you can't hear every word, just seeing each other can be great for the heart and soul. This is a truly social time....not an outdoor service in any way as those are still prohibited in the Anglican, United, and Presbyterian Churches at last check. Have

## **An Irish Parson joke:**

A farmer dropped in on his Parish Priest in County Clare. His beloved dog had passed away and he asked the Parson if he would come out and say a few words at the burial.

The Priest said "Alas, we do not provide interments services for dogs or other pets... you can just say a prayer over the creature yourself!"

The man sighed and said "Well those folks down at the Baptist Church will pray over everything, even a dog who's Catholic not Baptist. I'll call that minister and turn my \$5000 donation over to that church."

The Priest rose to his full height and bellowed: “Sweet Mary, Mother of God, why you did not first tell me the beast was Catholic! I’ll be out in two hours and we’ll have a full communion”.

**Scripture for the Day: Matthew 9:16,17**

**No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old cloak, for the patch pulls away from the cloak, and a worse tear is made. <sup>17</sup> Neither is new wine put into old wineskins; otherwise, the skins burst, and the wine is spilled, and the skins are destroyed; but new wine is put into fresh wineskins, and so both are preserved.”**



**Reflection for the Day:** (from the work of the **Rev. Bob Danalls**, long-serving priest in Dallas Texas and interim Rector in Manhattan, New York. It was sent to me by Philip Gunyon and Barbara Graham+. Philip was generous enough to say that our Scoop’s ministry is a good example of making the new “clothes” fit the unique culture and needs of particular congregations, situations and times. Not mere imitation, or doing the current “new’ thing automatically if something else can be tried out to see how it fits or flops..... )

There once was a world where the church functioned according to what some have called the “participatory” model. People come to a holy space, a location, connect with a set community of people, receive spiritual resources, and serve as patrons of the religious grounding of society. Beginning in the 1960s a shift began to happen in North American culture — away from the church as central to the social realm. With each succeeding generation, the influence of the church diminished, and now, in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, the shift has taken a severe new turn.

The loss of membership, influence, resources, a sense of mission, and social dislocation — the church’s misfortune of the moment — resembles many previous epochs where God enables the faith community to face challenges and live into a new era. The Bible is replete with stories of transition, exile, set-back and recovery. Jacob, who was always a wimpy character, is on his way to meet

the brother he tricked and fooled. He struggles with an angel on the wet banks of the Jabbok River, and out of the struggle finds strength to meet his brother. Jesus spends forty days in the wilderness — alone and hungry — and the evil one tempts and assaults him. The process of thinking, testing and exploring contains the lessons. Logically, if not spiritually, we may have to allow for the possibility that our new dislocations are occasions of new creation. God is no stranger to Eden's deportation, Babel's scattering, the Exodus, the Exile, and the Crucifixion.

In the coming months (and years) churches will need to remember that no handbook is available on freelancing mission — we'll grab good learnings where we can get them. Congregations will hanker for the new techniques, the fresh new ways of doing church. But the shortcut of mere imitation bypasses the need for local trial and cultural and theological fit. Only by stepping out, being ourselves, offering the gifts of God's love and justice, and seeing and exploring fresh angles of ministry will lead Christian leaders into the new realm. As Peter Steinke has said, "Maybe a word of caution should be stamped on all programs: 'Not necessarily transferable.'" This process of "trying on new clothing," or in the words of the Psalmist, "singing a new song in a strange land," can be a tough slog, but by staying on the path new insight will open. There will be misfires and setbacks, possible loss of income and moments of discontent. We might have smaller congregations and leaner staffs, and maybe we'll be riskier and more focused. We quite possibly will have fewer denominational guard rails and feel more on our own. There will also be glorious new discoveries, new growth patterns, new virtual associations, and surprising and satisfying experiences. One thing is certain: when the curve straightens we will look different. What else is new?! So buckle up, hold on to your hat, say your prayers — here we go again in God's wonderful world of being the Body of Christ.

### **Prayers for the Day:**

O God, the protector of all who trust in you,  
without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy:  
increase and multiply upon us your mercy;  
that with you as our ruler and guide,

we may so pass through things temporal  
that we lose not our hold on things eternal;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. (BCP)

**A Creed for times of Trouble:**

We are not people of fear:  
we are people of courage.  
We are not people who protect our own safety:  
we are people who protect our neighbours' safety.  
We are not people of greed:  
we are people of generosity.  
We are your people God,  
giving and loving,  
wherever we are,  
whatever it costs  
For as long as it takes  
wherever you call us.

*Barbara Glasson, President of the Methodist Conference*

*Blessings Abundant*

*From Judie+*