



FORT MASSEY STAR

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A Word From the Pastor...

Flooding in Quebec, Manitoba and the Mississippi; fires in Alberta; killer tornadoes in the US; rain and more rain in Nova Scotia. This spring we talked a lot about the weather, a favourite pastime with most of us anyway. We have often said here in the Maritimes *that if you don't like the weather just wait an hour and it will change.* Weather patterns around the world seem oddly out of sync.

Someone writes: *I can just see it now: two cave-men huddled close to their fire. Outside it's raining, sleeting, thundering and storming. One grumbles to the other, "You know, we never had this crazy weather before they started using bows and arrows."*

Likely many conservative Christians around the world see the weather images of today as signs of the end times. Most of us probably take them no more seriously than the storm of the cavemen. But we should consider what is happening for it may be part of the damage which humankind is doing to the planet. We are putting carbon dioxide into the

atmosphere in record amounts at the same time that we are cutting down trees. We are watching the balance of nature being destroyed.

There is a story told about a *summer religious camp for children. One of the counsellors was leading a discussion on the purpose God has for all of his creation. They began to find good reasons for clouds and trees, rocks and rivers, animals and just about everything else in nature.*

Finally, one of the children said, "If God has a good purpose for everything, why did he create poison ivy?" The discussion leader gulped and, as he struggled with the question, one of the other children came to the rescue, saying, "The reason God made poison ivy is that she wanted us to know there are certain things we should keep our cotton-pickin' hands off of."

There are things which we certainly have messed up in our life on the planet, things with which we likely should have kept our hands off.

We have often read the creation story found in the

book of Genesis and taken it to mean that we have free license to do what we want. We read the familiar words, **God blessed them, and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase. Fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion over ..."**

We read such words as meaning that we are the dominant force in the world and that we can do what we want. We might have done a better job if we had adopted the aboriginal way of looking at the world. They see themselves as stewards of the Earth.

It is summer, or so the calendar says, and we should think about the world in which we live. Our faith should lead us into new understandings of how to live. Global warming, weather patterns that are out of sync, all of this should concern us. We must continue to ask the serious questions. We need to become stewards of creation, people who care about the forests, the oceans, the animals, the world. But it is not enough to wait and hope that the world will protect itself. We are the world. We

We must begin to live simply that all might live.

Enjoy your summer!

~Rev. Trent



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Parable of the Wedding



“HOW DID YOU
GET IN HERE, MY
FRIEND,
WITHOUT A
WEDDING
GARMENT?”



In the 22nd chapter of the book of Matthew we find the story of the parable of the wedding feast. The gist of the story is that a king has invited many important people to attend a wedding feast, but when the day comes they make their excuses and in some cases abuse and kill the king’s servants sent to carry the invitation. The king in his fury sends his troops to mete out punishment on the ingrates. The king then sends his servants out into the streets and byways to collect everyone and anyone they could find to invite them to the wedding feast. When the time of the feast arrives the king comes to see his guests. He notices one of the guests is not wearing a “wedding garment” and asks him, “How did you get in here, my friend, without a wedding garment?” The man remains silent as he has no response. The king then has him bound and thrown out into the darkness.

Without knowledge of the cultural norms under which this story was written it is impossible to fully understand the meaning behind the words.

A missionary gentleman, a bachelor, who had been

in India for several years prior to my parents arrival told my father about something that he had experienced which put this parable into a clearer light. This gentleman was, as many missionaries, unable to afford truly fashionable clothing. In light of his lack of wardrobe he was not sure what to do when he was invited by a local Maharaja to attend an important function. He knew that his clothes were not suitable to wear to such a function, but he also knew that he couldn’t turn down the invitation. Reluctantly he sent an affirmative response, saying that he would be honoured to attend. He was worrying about what he should do about the clothing to wear when the tailor arrived from the Maharaja to fit him for a complete suit of clothes—to be paid for by the Maharaja. It became apparent that the Maharaja, who had great wealth, was supplying “wedding garments” for all the invited guests. These were the “wedding garments” of the parable—garments provided freely from the wealth of the King.

In the parable those who didn’t show up for the

wedding feast as first planned had not only turned down the King’s invitation but had also accepted the gift of their “wedding garments” and then not had the decency to attend—not only that, but they also mistreated those sent by the king.

As to the man who attended the feast but didn’t wear any “wedding garments”, he either wasn’t invited or he had sold the garments the King had given him, thinking that the gift of the king could enrich him monetarily and that he could also enjoy the feast unnoticed.

*Submitted by
Ian MacDonald*



Nancy Riggs with the quilt square she sewed for Maritime Conference quilt.

The Talking Centipede

A single guy decided life would be more fun if he had a pet. So he went to the pet store and told the owner that he wanted to buy an unusual pet.

After some discussion, he finally bought a talking centipede which came in a little white box to use for his house. He took the box back home, found a good spot for the box, and decided he would start off by taking his new pet to church with him.

So he asked the centipede in the box, "Would you like to go to church with me today? We will have a good time".

But there was no answer from his new pet.

This bothered him a bit, but he waited a few minutes and then asked again, How about going to church with me and receive blessings?"

But again, there was no answer from his new friend and pet. So he waited a few minutes more, thinking about the situation.

The guy decided to invite the centipede one last time.

This time he put his face up against the centipede's house and shouted, "Hey, in there! Would you like to go to church with me and learn about God?"

YOU ARE GOING TO LOVE THIS....

This time, a little voice came out of the box, "I heard you the first time! I'm putting my shoes on!"

*Submitted by
Alison McDonald*

Roof Repair Fund Comes Out on Top!

The Fort Massey congregation has once again showed its extraordinary generosity by answering the call for donations to repair the north roof.

Despite a brief campaign, enough funds have been provided or pledged to enable us to take on the repairs with confidence that we are well on our way to covering the \$30,000 estimated cost.

It is gratifying to note that 80% of the amount raised to date has been in the form of "up front" payments, making it unnecessary to encroach on our investments in order to pay for the work, which will begin as soon as the weather improves!

The campaign was a joint effort of the Finance and

effort of the Finance and Property Committees, which arranged for all member of the congregation to receive a letter and pledge form, as well as a personalized note of thanks for each pledge received.

Our appreciation to them for their work on this campaign – and a huge THANK YOU to everyone who so graciously and willingly supported their efforts to protect and preserve our wonderful building.

*Submitted by
Peter Coulthard
Finance Committee*



CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 2011!

Everything I Need to Know, I Learned From Noah's Ark

Everything I need to know about life, I learned from Noah's Ark. **One:** Don't miss the boat. **Two:** Remember that we are all in the same boat. **Three:** Plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the Ark. **Four:** Stay fit. When you're 600 years old, someone may ask you to do some-

thing really big. **Five:** Don't listen to critics; just get on with the job that needs to be done. **Six:** Build your future on high ground. **Seven:** For safety's sake, travel in pairs. **Eight:** Speed isn't always an advantage. The snails were on board with the cheetahs. **Nine:** When you're stressed,

float a while. **Ten:** Remember, the Ark was built by amateurs; the Titanic by professionals. **Eleven:** No matter the storm, when you are with God, there's always a rainbow waiting.

*Submitted by
Dorothy Kern*



Chaplaincy and the Language of Faith

Times are changing in our faith around chaplaincy in the hospitals and even in the language we use to communicate spiritual care. There are fewer chaplains at the hospital and the patients come from more diverse backgrounds. It can make a considerable difference with the age of the patient if they want a chaplain; older generations understand a 'religious' language. As a new Chaplain at a local hospital when I visit people, I often hear, "Oh, I'm not religious", or from health worker referrals, 'Oh, they are not religious', often meaning, 'don't visit' or 'what will I say to clergy' or 'I am uncomfortable.' A visit from a Chaplain can lead to tenuous faith feelings or anxiety.

A Chaplain visit in the hospital is simply an invitation to explore the patient's own spirituality; that inner seed that reaches outward toward a higher power. It is in this sacred place that the individual can find comfort and peace in times of anxiety. As Chaplains we try and speak authentically in the language of a patient's own faith.

A Chaplain is challenged to use spiritually engaging

language and images that can communicate with a wide range of people, both young and old, of a variety of secular cultures and of many faith traditions. Hospitalization can be a stressful time and questions around spirituality can lead to better health results. In past generations, faith and religion were seen as synonymous. This does not seem to be the case nowadays! Religion is a cultural system that establishes symbols that relates humanity to spirituality. Faith is an assurance, or belief or trust in an external power. While similar in nature, the language of religion no longer works for many people and they seek a relationship with the divine outside of institutions such as in personal prayer, and devotions, or in nature or maybe simply in family. Open communication with a spouse and the love and support of families is often the first step in spiritual care in the language of love.

Chaplaincy and spiritual care is an integral part of health care during hospitalization to help patients relate their human experiences to the sacred, to acknowledge that they are not alone and to access that source of strength,

love and courage that comes from the Creator. It is patient-centered spirituality where the patient can trust the chaplain to engage in deep listening, quiet accompaniment on the journey, or help with familiar rituals like prayer or holy rites.

God created a seed of the divine in each of us and it is that spirit that calls to God for comfort and strength: Psalm 139 Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast. If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me," even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you. For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb.

Chaplains that work in our hospitals have a special ministry and are a blessing to the patients, families and health workers. They help to unlock the faith within and leave

room for the body to heal and free the patient to move forward.

**Submitted by
Ruth McArthur**

Ordinand in the United Church of Canada and graduate of Masters of Divinity at AST.

Note: *I will be presiding over Sunday Worship in July and am open to a children's camp fire sing-along choir or other ideas. Contact me on Sundays.*



The 'Holly MacBenn'

Alan and I decided that since our back yard is the Bras d' Or Lake, we should have a way to enjoy it more, and this is how we plan to do it! It is a 26' pleasure craft with a sleeping/dining area, toilet and kitchenette. She is berthed at the Dundee Marina, as shown in this photo which is just 2 km from our home. We are super excited! Now all we need is some sunny and warm weather!!

Have a safe and happy summer everyone!

**Your editor and friend,
Holly**