



WILMOT UNITED CHURCH WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

For the Week of April 20, 2020



It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body

Peter writes:



According to our creation story we human creatures are made of two things: dust and the breath of God. All of us, each of us, the richest of us and the poorest, the greatest and the least, the most celebrated and the utterly obscure, the PhD's and those whose cannot read - dust and the breath of God.

We are in the season of resurrection. Now more than ever we need to know what we are made of. Resurrection is our testimony against the powers of despair and ugliness.

Dust is what God has to work with, not much, “the physical body” Paul calls it. But give it breath, give it strength and memory. Give it laughter and tears and a lump in the throat and an intimation of eternity in the soul. Give the dust a real heart, like the Tin Man got a real heart - now you have a living miracle. The physical body has become a spiritual body.

This Sunday in our virtual service you will hear the Wilmot Church organ. It can be said of the organ that, like us, it is sown a physical body, raised a spiritual body. Its pipes are made of lead, zinc, tin and antimony. Its wiring is copper. Its wood is California pine, Canadian pine, oak, B.C. fir and Tennessee poplar. The organ is made of leather and felt and ivory. It is intubated by an electric motor. But think of what music resounds from these materials when the physical body is raised, when it is played by the hand and heart in which the music resides.

It is sown the common substance of the earth; it is raised a hymn of praise. It is sown a collection of disparate materials; it is raised a harmony. It is sown a machine; it is raised a song. Lead, wood, leather become sound, music, emotion. It was sown a physical body in Ste. Hyacinthe, Quebec in 1951, it is raised in a spiritual body you will hear in our worship on Sunday.

Hearing the organ is an inspiration to us because it is a sign of what the living God does with the dust of human life. When we begin to respect ourselves and others as we respect the organ, we begin to understand why Paul says, “It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body.”

This is our testimony against the powers of despair and ugliness. We've known this since the dust first got its breath in the primordial morning of humanity. Now, more than ever, it is up to us to become what God has made us. That is, to become who we are.

Ellen writes,

A candle flickers

A flower is laid....

A prayer is said...

Hearts are broken and questions are numerous. Then stories begin to be told. Stories of ‘ordinary’ people who lived extraordinary lives touching the hearts of many.

Here at Wilmot we feel a connection with the dedicated teacher and amazing Mom, Lisa McCully, a kind and compassionate young woman. This connection began in the early 1960’s when Lisa’s Mom, Emily Kierstead, was on staff at Wilmot as a diaconal minister. Lisa herself, was well-known for her love of the children and youth not only at her school but also at Berwick, a United Church camp in the valley of Nova Scotia.

The Rev. Ruth Noble, the United Church’s Mission & Service Engagement Co-ordinator in Toronto, writes about her friend, Lisa: *“Berwick has been part of people’s lives for generations. Lisa and her sister and family grew up at Berwick, and now their children are part of the Berwick fabric of life. As I write this, I am surrounded by the scent of a candle that I bought in Berwick that has a gemstone in it. The scent reminds me of camp, and the hidden gemstone gives me hope for a way forward through the shock and grief that we all feel.”*

In our creed when we say “we are not alone” we are speaking of a great blessing. Belonging to a community of faith is, as an old saying goes, “worth its weight in gold.” Staying connected with each other is indeed a blessing for all ages.

The last couple of months have brought so many additional challenges with the spread of COVID-19. Families and friends are coping the best way they can - but most often at a distance. ZOOM, FaceTime and other platforms have become familiar avenues to explore. Newsletters, Virtual Services and phone calls have become our routine to stay connected to each other. Yet in the midst of our sadness, children and youth are painting rainbows that speak of solidarity, hope and love. Here we see William and Gwen Keyser who are busy finishing their rainbow.



On Wednesday, a Prayer Vigil was held. At the close of the service, the Rev. Catherine MacDonald, president of the region of NS & Bermuda, United Church of Canada read:

BLESSING FOR THE BROKEN HEARTED - Jan Richardson (2016)

Let us agree
for now
that we will not say
the breaking
makes us stronger or
that it is better
to have this pain
than to have done
without this love.

Let us promise
we will not
tell ourselves
time will heal the wound
when every day
our waking
opens it anew.

Perhaps for now
it can be enough
to simply marvel
at the mystery
of how a heart

so broken
can go on beating,
as if it were made
for precisely this

—as if it knows
the only cure for love
is more of it,

as if it sees
the heart's sole remedy
for breaking
is to love still,

as if it trusts
that its own
persistent pulse

is the rhythm
of a blessing
we cannot begin to fathom
but will save us
nonetheless.

Peter Short and Ellen Beairsto share an interim ministry at Wilmot United Church as the congregation prepares to call a new ministry team.