



WILMOT UNITED CHURCH WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

For the Week of March 15, 2021



The Very Rev. Dr. Peter Short

Peter writes,

Now and then life grasps you firmly by the elbow and ushers you onto a new stage. The script you find in your hand is unfamiliar, as is the set that surrounds you. There are actors you don't recognize and a cold stirring in the stomach. Even if your last gig was a reasonable success, it is evident that on this unfamiliar stage you don't know how to act.

Life will not be putting this production on hold so that you can have some time to learn your part. The drama is already going on all around you. Quickly it becomes clear that you must either become an actor on this stage or be abandoned as if you were a prop left behind by one of the stagehands.

Learning a new role is not easy. The first reading of the script is awkward. The words sound like someone else's and the desire to flee is strong. But of course, there is nowhere to go. You can't go back after life has put you here.

I am aware that in the church there are all kinds of us struggling to learn a new script and to act in an unfamiliar drama. When a child is born or a partner dies, life ushers us onto a new stage. Young parents stand before the mystery of how to impart values to their children. Older ones stand before the mystery of life's end. Marriage is begun. Or it is ended. The inevitable frailty of the human body makes its presence felt. A thirteen-year-old is walking through the door of a high school for the first time. Retirement arrives with its retinue of dreams and disappointments. Or graduation arrives, if it arrives at all, and your best friends in all the world begin to disperse.

What happens to us individually happens equally in community. The church finds itself looking back to a familiar set that has disappeared and looking ahead to a set in which it has not yet found its place.

So much of what we call faith is the struggle to imagine how we are going to manage and maybe even thrive when we are pushed onto a strange new stage. Such a struggle to imagine must have occupied the weary minds of the aged Abraham and Sarah when God handed them their new script and precious little else;

"Leave your country, your relatives, and your father's home, and go to a land that I will show you." (Gen. 12:1)

Abraham and Sarah didn't have much to go on except the faith that whatever world they were going to would one day, somehow, be called "Home."

Faith is not the gift of an unassailable answer, it is the struggle to imagine. Were we to look carefully around we would be shocked to see how many are struggling to imagine themselves living in the strange circumstances that have got hold of us. Rarely do we realize that, hidden behind the curtain, God is prompting the imagination that enables us to go on.

Therefore, out of our common, caring humanity we must understand and encourage one another. If it isn't happening now, we can be assured that it won't be too long before we are learning new lines and looking for a caring face on the stage of a brave new world.



Last week another one of Ellen's ideas got hold of her. She announced "a travel adventure across Canada and then who knows - maybe around the world." So we are keeping track of our travels by foot, bike, ski, skate or swim, to be recorded on a map at the church. In this photo Evelyn is making a contribution on skates. Evelyn thinks we can make it around the world.



This Sunday we are delighted to welcome cellist Emily Kennedy to our service. In this photo Emily and music director Steven Peacock can be seen rehearsing some of the music. This week's gifted team of musicians includes organist/pianist Margaret MacDonald and vocalist Heather Neville.



Reverend Ellen Beirsto

Ellen is on a well deserved holiday this week but will be back for our next edition of the Wilmot Newsletter.

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