

Canon Davis Memorial Church

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3rd SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY • January 24, 2021

Jonah 3:1-5, 10 • Psalm 62:5-12

1 Corinthians 7:29-31 • Mark 1:14-20

Dear Friends,

It has been no secret that our neighbour to the south has been of growing concern in recent years. To be sure, there have been hiccups from time to time. Sometimes there have been events that have been more than hiccups.

We as the neighbour to the north, become acutely aware of situations affecting the U.S,. We share much with each other. It has been said that Canada is like a mouse next to an elephant. We need to be alert and nimble enough to avoid being rolled over.

Indeed, we are very close. Our cultures are similar in many ways. Our economic ties are inseparable. We share the same continent and airsheds. There are other ties as well. So it is that we have become concerned as on one hand we are sharing in the COVID-19 pandemic; and on the other hand, we are watching the U.S. political stresses which reached levels way more than hiccups. The United States appeared for a brief moment to be in danger of coming apart. I am going to mention just a few of my own observations concerning this turmoil.

First, it would appear that there has been a certain latent level of unrest just below the surface of U.S. society. This unrest just seemed to need permission to break through that surface and make its areas of dissatisfaction known. Included were issues revolving around the economy; racism, church vs state, balance of powers, healthcare, climate change, and more.

Yes, there is more. Some of you may remember references to church closings and other indicators of the stresses felt in faith communities of all sorts. About a year ago I began to notice the use of the most important word from scripture. That word is 'love'. I first noticed it being more frequently

mentioned in television newscasts. Now, not only is it appearing in newscasts, it is popping up in TV advertisements and speeches.

January 20th was Inauguration Day in the U.S. In spite of the restrictions concerning the pandemic, the day was filled with tensions. It was also a day of celebration with music, poetry, speeches, fireworks, patriotic acts and more.

And lo and behold, I began to hear that word again — you know, the ‘I’ word, ‘love’. The central theme of the New Testament was being openly shared. I also became quickly aware of hearing other phrases related to God. Terms like *God Bless You* and one that I have rarely heard in my lifetime, *Godspeed!* In addition, the hymn *Amazing Grace* is increasingly heard these days. It is as though permission had been granted for people to openly feel comfortable to verbalize expressions their faith without lecturing anyone on details. These expressions were made in gatherings of people of all walks of life and a wide variety of faith backgrounds from around the world. You see, love is a profound force recognized around the globe. Love makes a wonderful difference! One can feel the difference as the mood changes for the better where there is love.

Humanity appears to have been on this earth for millions of years. Countless rough times and countless recoveries have taken place all of these years. Times of despair do not last forever. God continues to share the knowledge of the power of love. For God seeks to have us love one another as God loves us. God is the God of new starts - new beginnings. In this we have hope — eternal hope. For this we are ever thankful as we witness what only God can do! May we be ever thankful!

The blessings of our loving Creator God be upon you and those you love.

Ray+

You are invited to go each Sunday and/or Wednesday to the link:

tinyurl.com/StAlbans-CDMC

That is the link to St. Alban's Anglican Church in Burnaby B.C. Follow the instructions. You will find links to the Rev'd Greg Jenkins officiating at an Anglican church service with children's focus, church music, readings, prayers and a sermon.

If you are also interested in joining their weekly Bible Study, contact Rev. Greg at revgregjenkins@gmail.com He will be more than happy to be in touch about joining in with their group by ZOOM. I hope you will find these services help to deepen your faith.

We are joining with many parishes in our deanery in providing telephone support to our members and friends. This support is designed to keep us up to date, while not requiring a computer. A CDMC Pastoral Letter will be read this week through our phone ministry. 1-888-229-5422