

Lent 2010

Greetings to all the brothers and sisters at Redeemer in the Holy name of Jesus our Saviour:

I will begin this month's letter with an update on the six couples who regularly land out back of our place. Right on time on February 21st, as we have observed since moving in 10 years ago, the same six pairs of Geese commence their spring mating squawking. It is just as if they have a calendar to consult as they arrive at the same time each year. Now the neighbourhood families have interesting fans at their skating and hockey games on the few rinks they have created on the pond. I imagine that they will be shovelling more than snow.

I suppose the remarkable consistency of these geese should come as no surprise to any of us. It is a harbinger of Spring and we all know that it is coming. Spring has arrived every year of our existence and it is always welcomed. Still we marvel at the Lord God's giving of the seasons and all that they provide for us. The regularity of the blessings He grants us always gives cause for celebration. Our celebrating 75 years of His favour also brings no surprise. God has been constant for each of these years piling blessing upon blessing.

In our terms a blessing is a request for God's grace or presence. This is just what has happened and it is why we have together decided to "Praise His name forever!" The Holy writer in Ephesians states: ***"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,"*** (Ephesians 1:3) God blesses us both spiritually and physically through the power of the Holy Spirit who is constantly with us. For years we have known that it is Jesus Christ who joins His people together into one body, His own body. As a group of people gathered together into His congregation we all understand that if ***"one member suffers, all suffer together."*** (1Corinthians 12:26) A massive amount of gifts has been granted to us and we all know that they are to be shared. This is our faith - faith which is a simple trust in God's gifts, now and to come.

This faith which we have is not just simple knowledge of Christ's history, but it is God's gift. What we have accomplished in this place is not cause for celebration, but the result. We can't lay claim to anything that has been done here, for God

created them for us to do in Christ. All that Redeemer is and all that she has done are good works done by faith as the Holy Spirit is received through faith, and our own hearts are renewed and given new things to do day by day, and then we are able to do what we do.

With a lot of noise, squawking, fighting and fussing the geese out back of our place will accomplish the usual gaggle. New life will begin. Life is a creation of the Lord God Almighty and how He started it all is a mystery of love that reaches beyond our understanding.

The gaggle of silly sinful people that is our congregation is still accomplishing all the things that come naturally. Astounding as it may seem we are still His body. There is an authentic, organic unity in us and all believers in Christ. This is nurtured and received in His true body in the Lord's Supper. All the marks of the true church are still here after all these years. They are the pure doctrine of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments done in accordance with the Gospel of Christ. We are the church and this church alone is called Christ's body. By "this church" I am sure that you know that I mean the Holy Church Universal or The Holy Christian Church. We are all just privileged and blessed to be a part of it.

I am praying that all this makes sense to each and everyone. There might be times when we squawk and scramble and appear that we have no idea what is going on. The world around might indeed look at us as silly geese with little direction or purpose but, thanks be to God - He sees us as we are. We are His own dear children Redeemed and loved and set aside for a very special purpose. That is why we "Praise His name forever" as the family of God here on John and Severn.

Rejoicing in His days
Pastor Krestick