

## *A Note from the Revs....*

April 23, 2020



Dear friends in Christ,

Welcome to something new to do something old: namely, to stay in contact with you on a faith level. Something new, because we're starting our own pastoral letter to share with you every other week. Something old because turning to our faith in the midst of change is nothing new.

So why are we doing this? Well, dearly as these two type A personalities would like, we have resigned ourselves to the fact that we can't make the world stop. Our OUC volunteer leaders are busy keeping up with all the things that need keeping up with. And we're super thankful for that. We hope that what we are adding to the mix will give everyone an oasis to rest amidst the busyness. It's ironic that while staying at home, things can seem busier than ever.

So... pause with us... rest with us and be still. And know that God is with you, with us, and that we are not alone.

This year, we are more sympathetic than ever to the women who go to Jesus' tomb in the middle of the night. We are more sympathetic than ever to the disciples locked away in the upper room, and to the disciples walking the road to Emmaus. We are wondering together, *what just happened?* How did we get...*here?*

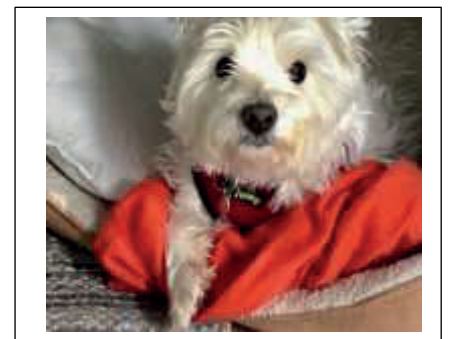
This isn't what we had planned on!

We are a bit dazed and disoriented and we miss you, our dear OUC family.

- ◆ We miss the kiddos gathered on the steps to the Discovery Garden.
  - ◆ We miss the hugs we get every Sunday morning.
  - ◆ We miss hearing the choir sing an anthem so beautifully.
- ◆ We miss worshipping with you.
  - ◆ We miss laughing with you.
  - ◆ We even miss crying with you.

**This little guy misses you too...**

Riley will be popping in every so often to offer a little church dog wisdom from time to time. But for now, he wants you to know that working from home is not the same and he looks forward to seeing you all in the office sooner rather than later.



Riley has also heard that right now, there is a shortage of blood available in our hospitals and he encourages you to contact Canadian Blood Services about safe ways in which you could donate blood at this critical time. Members in our very own congregation depend on blood products to keep well and they sure would appreciate your support. He'd donate if he could!!!



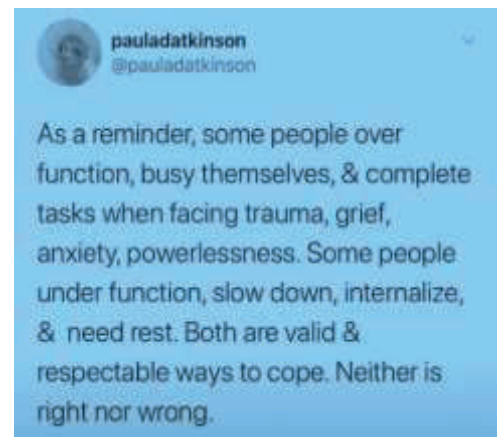
*Image thanks to Atlantic.ctvnews.ca*

We are also heartbroken for all those touched by the tragedy of the recent shooting in Portopique, NS. We know many of you have deep connections to Nova Scotia, and this senseless loss is affecting you in profound ways. We mourn the loss of so many lives and we grieve with all those who are hurting in the wake of this violence.

We were gratified and moved to see an outpouring of support and love for Nova Scotia in the days that followed. Let's keep a candle burning this week as we remember the victims, and their families.

There are a myriad of ways that people respond to grief, all of them valid, as this graphic insists:

And at times like these, our practices, the things we do that help us to connect with God and with one another and to feel God's presence with us, are all the more important. This coming Sunday, we will consider together how we can recognize and proclaim the risen Christ in our midst, even in this time of isolation. As usual, Molly will offer a children's story complete with PJ's and pearls, and this week, we will have a segment especially for youth. Come with your questions!



We are also glad to let you know that the majority of households on our church contact list have been contacted by email or by telephone at this point. Thank you to all the volunteers who helped us to get in touch!! Most of you who have responded to our Pastoral Care Outreach, have reported that you are doing well! We are delighted to hear it!! And we encourage you to remember that if you need pastoral support, we are only a phone call away!

And finally, Denny Ruddick asked us to once again pass along his thanks for the gifts and cards, the phone calls, the pre-Covid visits, and all the tangible expressions of love that his OUC family has given him. He is home now and is doing better all the time. Thanks be to God!

Until next time, we wish you God's grace and peace,

*Molly & Caroline*