

May 18, 2020

Trinity Musings #15: Rev Brian Goodings (self-isolating and getting a bit antsy in my office at Trinity United Church: Collingwood)

Have you noticed that we're now on a first name basis with the virus? When the nasty beast first came into our lives, we called it by its full and formal name; Novel Corona Virus. Soon after the introduction we learned that it also went by the name Covid-19. Now it goes by many names, lots of them starting with expletives, but more often than not it's just called Covid. Soon it will might just be called "Covie"...then maybe "the-Cov". Then just "Id"?

Our patience with this critter is growing as short as its name. There is no longer anything novel or even very interesting about this virus because it has thrown a wrench into everything. It shows no sign of leaving us alone either.

I've starting snapping lately and I think it's because of virus-worry-fatigue. It's the only topic on the news and every conversation too. I'm sick of it, but thankfully, not from it.

I'm not going to go into detail, but I lost my cool with a security guard at the grocery store. He's probably tired of telling people what to do; I'm tired of being told what I should do. We're all tired.

Earlier in the week, I had "a moment" on the Georgian Trail. A much faster cyclist passed me, without warning, on my right hand side. He's probably tired of riding around slower old geezers; I'm tired of spandex wearing whipper snippers on carbon frame bikes whizzing past me without warning. We're all tired.

It's gone on long enough already, hasn't it?

I've noticed the lovely painted rocks with cheery sayings on them that appeared a few months ago are fading in colour. Some of the words are blurred now too. Even some of the signs expressing good will and support for our Front Line workers are growing a bit tattered.

Apparently Covi is in no hurry to leave us. Given that it has probably been around in one form or another for a few billion years, a month or

even a decade is no time at all for this virus. It's got all the time in the universe. It's as persistent and tireless as the ultimate stalker Pepe la Pew, the skunk from Looney Tunes.

A couple of months ago, the rallying cry was...“We are going to defeat this virus and send it packing, tout suite.” Most of us were thinking in terms of weeks or maybe months.

Our spring vacations were cancelled, and that was inconvenient, but we could live with it. Now we are wondering about how it might affect plans for next Christmas. That's harder to live with.

The language used in responding to the threat of this virus has been militaristic from the start. “Deadly enemy” “Front-line” “Trenches” “Ammunition” “At War”.

We were getting ready for a pitched battle but the virus is extremely elusive, often invisible and not something we can really fight with might or force. Our language should probably change to terms associated with long distance running and endurance tests.

The adrenaline rush of the first few weeks is over and we can neither flee nor fight. It's become more of a siege and we know this is going to take time. Medical research, physical distancing, hand washing and careful regard for others; not fury is what is needed now.

Scripture and all wisdom traditions say that everything worth waiting for in life takes time. Waiting productively and with patience are signs of maturity and healthy choices.

There is more reason now to believe that we are going to find ways to live with and stop the spread of this virus. Apparently llamas have immune systems that can whip Covid-19, MERS and SARS easily and we might be able to use this to create a vaccine. But it's not likely that anything truly effective will be available before early next year.

In the meanwhile, I know that I need to chill out before I bop someone or someone bops me. Patience is a virtue that we all need, especially now.