

November 15, 2020,

Rev Jen's 28th WTF Love Letter From Lockdown

Dear People of Faith,

WTF!? When there's feelings!? Remembrance Day 2020 was like no other. A somber mood and scaled down ceremonies were observed from coast to coast. We paid our respect and observed from a distance. We stayed apart and at home even as we recognized and remembered the collective action that led to the freedom and peace we take for granted.

Remembrance Day brings up and out many emotions and feelings. We hold them tenderly. We remember a range of stories. The voices of veterans and those currently serving can be heard throughout the airwaves. And the poppy reminds us to remember.

And so we do. Year after year. We remember the service and the sacrifice.

And this year we are aware of another "enemy" as we globally fight the COVID 19 virus with collective action. We wear the PPE. We practice physical distancing. And yet the virus prevails, and the daily count keeps going up. The battle continues and we are all in this together and there is nowhere to go. We cannot escape. We are living in pandemic times and being challenged in whole new ways. We are vulnerable and fragile, and we do not know when the Pandemic will end.

WTF!? Well that's finished: The US Election was an emotional rollercoaster ride for many. The transition of power is challenging too as the world waits for this change to occur.

And this church is closing too in June 2021. We have entered the "end times" of this congregation and the going is tough. People are sad, angry, and upset, depressed and despairing even though they "saw it coming". And here we are, facing it all and feeling the feelings. And those feeling can be overwhelming and can overtake us unaware. Please be gentle with yourself and others during these emotionally challenging days. Adjusting and adapting to change of this magnitude takes time. Let us take the time to attend to the pastoral and spiritual issues of ending, leaving, and letting go. This is a piece of our work going forward.

WTF!? When tears flow!? YES! They are still flowing for all kinds of reasons for all kinds of people. Let the tears flow. The grieving, groaning, ranting, and raving continue. The resistance to change continues. And the change continues. This is where we are. Tears are one way to release the pent-up energy.

We the followers: We remember. We tell and retell the stories of our faith. We tell the holy history of hope that the people of faith have held throughout time. Hope in the midst of ordeals. Hope in the midst of calamity. Hope in the midst of a pandemic. Hope in the future.

We the followers hold on to the hope. In the midst of the gory of life we are able to recall, retain and reclaim the glory of God. The only difference between gory and glory is the letter L. For me that "L" represents love, lament and letting go.

As I read the text of the day I thought about the “talents” we have been given from the master and what we do with them while we wait for the end times.

Do we immediately multiply them as two of the slaves did? Do we hold them and hoard them? Do we negatively judge the giver even as we receive the gift? Do we take the gift and hold it against the giver with a poverty of spirit attitude? Clearly there are a few responses to the talents given.

What do we do with the talents given? In the end times as we wait, how we spend our time, treasure and talents matters greatly. What we do while we wait is just as important as the waiting. And using the talents you have been given for the greatest good of the kingdom of God is what you are here to do. Multiply the talent. Grow the gift. Do something with the talent! Go and make a difference in your world. And use the God-given talents you’ve been given to serve the kingdom here and now.

What do you do with the talents you have been given? In these end times in the church, how will you use the “gifts of love” that God has given to you? How do you want to participate?

My prayer is that you will seek to multiply the love of God in the world and that you will use your talents and gifts for the kingdom right here and now, even as we wait for the end to come.

Your love, prayers, offerings, and support are required even more during these end times in the church. My hope is that we will continue to worship no matter what and that we will remain faithful followers as we do the hard and holy work of closure. We are still called to love and serve, and we will do this to the end! In the words of a Hymn...

”O Jesus I have promised to serve you to the end. Remain forever near me, my master, and my friend. I shall not fear the battle, if you are by my side, nor wander from the pathway, if you will be my guide.

Guide us God we pray.

With love from,

Rev Jen