

September 29, 2020

Trinity Musings #25: Rev Brian Goodings (masked@Trinity United Church: Collingwood)

To wear a mask or not wear a mask...that seems to be the question.

I wear one because I have decided it's the right thing to do but, then again, I generally trust people in authority. I'm still a church goer too and believe our lives are best lived within ethical and moral boundaries and with deep consideration for the wellbeing of others.

Those thoughts can sound pretty dumb in our hedonistic Fox News society. Sounds like something a killjoy-loser-church-goer would say.

Who believes in much of anything like that these days? As the emptying churches have learned, people don't like to be admonished or told what to do.

I have to say that the church did get pretty good at sanctimonious scolding after about two thousand years of practice. Preachers, from lofty raised pulpits, literally lorded over people sitting in the pews and frequently delivered "Bad Dog" sermons with great relish.

Apparently, preachers thought they were rightfully speaking on behalf of a grumpy and always disapproving God. THOU SHALT NOT...was always, at least implied in almost every sermon.

Nowadays, most people in our society, no matter their age, don't buy into that stuff. As a culture, we quit trusting anyone over the age of 30, sometime during the mid-1970's. In the 90's we dropped the age limit and just quit trusting everyone.

That's about when we decided having Rights and Freedoms was more important than having Responsibilities and Restraints.

Everyone had the god-given right to discover that the stove was hot for themselves.

As my kids used to say when they were 2 years old..."Yer not the boss of me!" People were free to do their own thing...man. Narcissism, not self-

sacrifice or consideration for others, was strongly encouraged and grew as the churches and service clubs shrank.

Greed and self-serving behaviours were very good for business too.

Did you hear about that crazy car party in Wasaga Beach on the weekend? I wouldn't preach it but I did think... "We hath reaped what we hath sowed."

Is this a sign of a New-Revolution against authority of all kinds? (I've gone almost an entire musing without mentioning the "Mendacious Menace" to the south of us but he is the best example of what it means to be toxically self-serving.)

Over the last six months or so, Doug Ford has often sounded, to me, like a preacher pounding the same pulpit day after day. He was pretty well received, at least at first, and implored all of us, "friends", to pull together.

There were lots of AMEN's and murmurs of approval from the good folk of Ontario and across Canada. We painted rocks with cheery sayings and washed our groceries and there were gobs of cash from...well I dunno where it all came from but it was good.

However, as it has dragged on, this Covid thing has become a drag and patience is waning. Many youngsters and lots of oldsters are getting tired of listening to the predictable and increasingly boring sermons of "Thou Still Shalt Nots" from Rev. Doug for the last six months.

Many believe they are really "special" and it's just not fair to limit any of their freedom. To them, the epidemic may or may not be fake but it sure is annoying and has already wrecked spring and summer plans. Sheesh.

Now we are told to wear masks when we go out and, for some, that's the last straw. The debate about masks and really all things-Covid is getting hotter and there is less and less toleration.

Last week I was getting gas in Thornbury and heard the roar of a muscle truck pull up behind me. The driver, a very big guy, parked sideways across the Handicapped spot, got out and walked straight into the store. He was not wearing a mask and nobody challenged him. He bought a deck of smokes and after throwing the cellophane wrapper sorta towards the garbage can, roared off.

Everything about him was bristling defiance.

Crazy as it sounds, he's the guy I'm wearing my mask to protect from getting ill. He's the guy I'll get vaccinated for too.

It's not because he's particularly likeable but if a guy like that gets sick, he's going to end up in a hospital bed we all pay for and take up as much doc-room as he does in life.

Protecting him is ultimately going to do more to protect me and my family. It ain't fair and that guy would likely tell me to mind my own business...and that's precisely what I'm doing.

I'm never going to even try to preach a Thou Shalt Not sermon to him or those with whom he keeps company because they wouldn't hear or believe it.

Instead, I Shall Do all I can to protect him and me and as many others as possible.

The sermon I "hear" whenever I wear or see others wearing a mask is that we have decided it's worth putting up with some minor inconveniences now to protect the health of our shared futures.

So if you believe this, please wear a mask. If you won't or can't...stay as far away from me and others as possible. I really don't want to argue with you about anything. Let's just leave it at that...breathe....but not on me. AMEN

