

Rev. Brian's Musing #8

Rev. Brian Goodings (self-isolating <for the most part> in my office at Trinity United Church: Collingwood)

Have you noticed all the colourful and nicely knotted dog-poop bags alongside the trails? I see them beside the Georgian Trail when I'm riding here to work and they are a strong feature on the Loree trails too. Some thoughtful people even fill them up and then hang them in trees. Nice. Apparently people believe there is a dog-poop-fairy who goes out at night while we are sleeping to gather these wee nasty gifts.

One person told me they thought they were picked up by a Town employee. Your tax dollars at work doin' _____. Funny, when you think about it, that any would expect our government to do stuff like that, but we Canadians do.

My friend who lives in the UK tells me we live in a Nanny-state. She can't believe some of the messages we post on signs and some of the stuff we can't do. I'd have to agree with her about some of the things we take for granted that maybe should be questioned. Like, would having a beer (not 10 and not driving afterwards) in a park really lead to the breakdown of society? There are many very peaceful and safe countries in the world that allow these kinds of practices and the reality is that most people don't behave like idiots when they are responsible for their own behaviours.

We were in Iceland a few years ago and were gobsmacked with the lack of signage and protective fencing around some of the most beautiful and dangerous attractions we'd ever seen. We stood about twenty feet from the brink of a magnificent waterfall that rivaled Niagara's and there were no warning signs or fencing. You could get as close as you wanted and nobody was going to stop you. Another day we went to see a huge hot spring geyser and there was just a tiny shoestring rope around it. It was the only thing even suggesting that getting too close to a geyser was a really dumb thing to do. Icelanders apparently believe strongly in natural selection and common sense. People, who can't figure out what not to do in places like these, probably shouldn't pass on their genes to offspring.

Reminds me of a farmer who told me there is no such thing as a dumb 2 year-old farm dog. Dumb dogs have very short lives on a farm.

We do depend a lot on governments to oversee our safety, but sometimes it is a bit much really. If you have driven from Parry Sound to Sudbury on Highway 69 you might have noticed a couple of silly signs. One sign says something like "Big Trucks Take Up More Room Than Cars". Another one says, "Do Not Pass If You See Oncoming Traffic". People who don't know this are driving?!

A few weeks ago we were pretty much all on the same page when it came to obeying Doug and Justin's instructions to just stay home and stay apart but I think we are all

getting a bit tired of this time. I hear people starting to question and even challenge the rules.

On Friday night I rode my bicycle past a group of guys in a backyard having an illegal campfire. Music was blaring and, from the pile of firewood and smoking barbeques, it looked like they were going to be there for a while. They were all wearing black baseball caps and Simcoe/Grey/Bruce "dinner jackets" (aka plaid lumberjack coats) and I would guess they were drinking Labatt's 50, Canadian or Blue. I was going to stop and tell them they shouldn't be having a campfire and I doubt they lived together at the same address...but I really wanted to live another day so just kept going.

Nothing remotely harmful will probably come from having the party and I understand their frustration but... we need to stay the course for a little while longer. And acknowledge that the powers we have given to our government have been well used. The reason we are not in a horrible crisis right now is because we have listened and decided to pull together.

If you look to the south of us you will see quite a different story. The United States always wants to be first in the world in everything and it looks like they are going to win first prize in the Covid-19 infection and death rate too. Apparently viruses, once on their shores, have the right to roam as freely as they do. There's no way any Second Amendment gun-totin' dudes are going to be told what to do by any government. I doubt many of them have been to, or would survive, Iceland either. In the famous words of Forrest Gump's mom, "Stupid is as stupid does".

Let's stay the course we have agreed to be on with our governments for a while longer because it is working... but pick up your own dog-poop bags too because Justin and Doug are busy!