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Trinity Musings #45: from Rev Brian Goodings trinityminister@bmts.com
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"Life is good"

After I read that saying on an old t-shirt I found in my drawer last week, I realized I haven't heard or thought that for quite a while. I was surprised with how relieved I felt after reading it.

Except for Telus ads that claim, "**The Future is Friendly**", positive messaging about this time and the times to come, is rare.

We know that life is not perfect; not uncomplicated; not without tragedy; not guaranteed; not always...but so many times, good.

Even now, although this has been the strangest year of my life, I can't remember a better winter for fresh snow and sunshine. Cross-country skiing conditions have been fabulous.

I estimate the distance I have skied, so far this year, to be around 460 kilometres. I thought I was doing well until I met another keener on the trails this week who has already skied 890 kilometres. He told me he is "chasing" another guy in North Bay who has logged over 1800 kilometres.

They post their distances online, along with dozens of other people who are also keeping (and making) track. There are a lot of people enjoying this perfect cross-country skiing winter.

Lots of them are older people that often have even better endurance (and a lot more time) than younger people. As my friend said, "We're not fast but, with the right wax we oldsters, can stick with it." Like Aesop's tortoise, eventually we get where we are heading, even though there is a loss of "hare". (sorry for that one)

The greatest thing about our meeting on the trail was how little we talked about a certain virus. It did come up briefly but we had a lot more interest in comparing notes about the trails we have skied and just how wonderful a

winter it has been to get outside. We were 20 feet apart so we were unmasked and able to share smiles.

The good feelings spilled over to the weekend and I think our entire neighbourhood was out enjoying the day on Sunday. We could hear kids laughing and dogs barking as Isaac and I set up our tents and stacked our campfire wood for “Camp Swampy”. (We’ll be sleeping out there this week during our Canadian Ski Marathon...if you really are interested see Trinity Musings 44 for details.)

On more than a number of occasions lately, the world has felt like a safer and more joyful place than it has for months. On Sunday, I stood quietly in the strong sunlight watching the birds coming and going from my feeders and fearful feelings, that I’ve been harbouring for many months, eased.

I know that we still need to be vigilant and I know that we’re not out of the Covid-woods yet...but it feels very good to think of the world as a welcoming rather than hostile place.

More than many cultures, we are quite fearful about what enemy might be coming next. We use worry-language for just about everything and I find it to be quite exhausting.

Worry-experts get a lot of airtime and give us endless reasons for being concerned about everything. I do trust them and believe they think they are being helpful but, sometimes, I know I listen to them too much. I also need to remember how much time can be wasted worrying about predictions that, in the end, don’t actually come true. And even those that do are rarely as bad or good as predicted.

I have been graced with knowing a few people who dance with, rather than wrestle with, what comes to them in life. One, who was my most precious mentor, had times of great suffering in his life and died of ALS a year ago. But even to his dying day, he still emanated joy. He always thought of life as a gift to be cherished with endless thanks and joy, rather than “his” to hoard and protect against others. He spent his last year frequently going to a medical school near his home so the students could learn about what happens to a person dying of ALS. He never lost his sense of humour and the last picture I have of him was “dancing” at the hospital in his wheelchair.

He was deeply religious, in all the right ways. He believed that it is our God-given task to celebrate the time we have to devote our lives to loving creation every day, as well as we are able.

It is to start each day with the assumption that life is, in itself, good. (If you are a Bible person you will know that the phrase “Saw that it was good” is the phrase God “speaks” in Genesis after each new day too.)

If you would prefer to think of the universe in scientific terms you might want to explore a concept called the “Anthropic Principle”. As I understand the Principle...the universe itself supports life because it is compelled to do so by deep forces of **“compatible goodness”**. Life is not a fluke or accident because the universe “itself” yearns to be **known kindly** and has created conditions necessary for consciousness. “It” has provided all the right parameters for life to arise, and as such, is a **genial host** to our lives.

Cool thoughts eh? Says pretty much what the t-shirt I’m wearing does...
“**Life is good**”. Something not to forget.