



David's Dialogue

Dear members and friends of St. Matthew's

And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became bright as light.(Matthew 17:2)

By the time you read this, we will be in the season of Lent. The moment that starts our Lenten journey is the moment when Jesus is transfigured and who he really is shines for the world to see. It is at that moment that he realized he will have to face the forces of evil and that it will require a great sacrifice to overcome them.

The transfiguration is a good thing to keep in mind as we journey towards Good Friday. It is the reason we are going where we are going, that glimpse of truth that fills our souls for a moment like a super nova. I like to call Transfiguration Sunday, Trans Sunday as a way of honouring and remembering the remarkable Trans-gendered people who are a part of our community. And Trans Sunday this year prepared me to address a recent tragedy.

We have all been horrified and sickened by the mass shooting in Tumbler Ridge. A total of nine people died in that shooting, including the alleged shooter. The victims included an educator and five students between 12 and 13 years old at a school. The suspect's mother and step-brother were also found dead in their home nearby. Twenty five more youth were injured.

The person who is suspected of carrying out this unthinkable crime was 18 years old with a history of mental health issues. She also happens to have been transgendered. Born as male, she had consistently identified as female over a period of time, had changed her name and was living as a female. The only reason this is significant for understanding the horrific shooting which they seem to have perpetrated is that there are people who are poised to multiply this tragedy and turn the shooter's gender identity into a weapon to endanger more innocent and vulnerable people.

Lent is a time when we are encouraged to resist evil. And there is evil in the air right now. Popular and well-known figures in Donald Trump's MAGA movement have accused trans people of being dangerous and made claims that they are disproportionately represented among mass killers. The day after the shooting of right-wing activist Charlie Kirk last September, for example, President Trump's son Donald Trump Jr. said on a popular TV show, "I can't name,

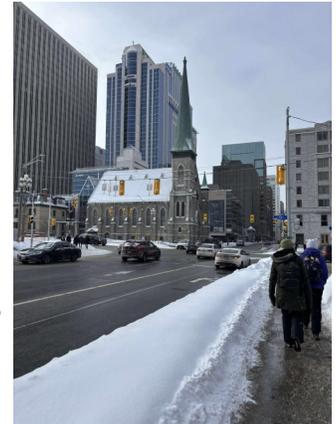
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Winterlude / Worshiplude Adventure



I just wanted to say thank you again, from the bottom of my heart, for your kindness, generosity, and guidance throughout this journey. Your support truly means so much to me. I received the cheque from our UCW (St. Matthew's United Church Women). It was such a kind gesture.

As for my first trip to Ottawa - it was amazing! I made a lot of new friends and experienced many memorable moments as well!



The VIA Rail commute took about five to six hours each way. On Friday, we went ice skating on the Rideau Canal, which was definitely nice (despite the -30°C weather!) though it was far too cold to take any pictures that day. Saturday was packed with Winterlude activities, including snow tubing, the Ferris wheel, maze, stick throwing, and more. We also visited the Bank of Canada Museum, the Parliament Immersive Experience, and Confederation park, where we saw nice ice sculptures, and enjoyed beaver tails. We also played man hunt in the snow with the youth, which was hilarious.



Then, we went for Worshiplude and dinner at MacKay United



Church with the moderator of the United Church of Canada, Rev. Dr. Kimberly Heath. The service was beautiful, and included a live jazz band. On Sunday, we went for worship at City View United Church, where we had been staying, and each attendee including myself shared a highlight from the trip with the congregation. Each evening concluded with time for socializing, games, hot chocolate, and a prayer, which made the experience even more special.

I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity to have gone on this trip, and I truly cannot thank you enough for making it possible. I have attached a few photos that I took on the trip as well - there are not many, as it was quite cold most of the time!

Thank you again!
Kind regards, AJ



An OWL VISITS

At first, Lois Macklin, Virginia Wainman's daughter thought she had seen a Grey Horned Owl in the tree in her back yard. But then with a colour photo, she got a better perspective of its colouring. This owl is a Barred Owl. It is large and stocky and is known for its



distinctive call and striking brown and white striped plumage with no ear tufts. It is native to North America. The photo was taken by Lois who lives at the north end of Barrie. And Virginia has kindly shared it with us.

To the left is a close-up. On the right you see the owl confidently surveying Lois' back yard.



A VIST TO SEE STEVE!

On Tuesday, Feb. 24th, Rev. David along with Bertha Hurdman, Joan Plume, and Bill Hurdman, headed down to London to visit Steve Sallows who is still recovering from the car crash in downtown London on Sept. 10, 2025. Our prayers are with him for continued recovery and our hearts are still heavy from the loss of Cathy during that accident.



There's Always Room For A New Plant and a Cat



Here's a photo of my new Giant Butterwort; it attracts very small gnats and moths and let's just say— it makes them disappear. As you can see its first flower has bloomed—that was in mid January. It is a delicate purplish-pink colour. Very attractive. It has a special place in the master bathroom given it seems there is a group of tiny moths in the adjacent walk-in closet—which have vanished since “Pinky” entered the room.. A few days ago, it started to bloom a second flower!! That picture is to the right. In the last 3 days, that bud's stem has grown



longer and the bud has started to show the edges of what will soon be a second flower purply-pink flower matching the one already there!

Many of you know that I have Helen's cat Willow. She is still wondering why she's here but is starting to relax. She is more cuddly as time goes on. She follows me up and down the stairs occasionally sitting in the lazy boy to watch TV. She hangs out on my office's visitor chair while I work beside her. And she doesn't mind the hours! She's content, well fed, and runs to me when she hears me sing her good-night song. When bored, she takes on her favourite job of keeping an eye on the house from the bedroom doorway!



Photos by Doreen

